



HOUSE OF COMMONS

House of Commons Commission

Thirty-seventh report of the Commission,
and annual report of the Administration
Estimate Audit Committee

Financial Year 2014/15



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of the Administration Estimate Audit Committee**

Financial Year 2014/15

Report presented to the House of Commons pursuant to section 1(3) of the House of Commons
(Administration) Act 1978

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Financial years are shown thus: 2014/15

Parliamentary sessions are shown thus: 2014-15

The Commission Annual Report for 2014/15 follows the same structure as the Corporate Business Plan 2014/15 in terms of the Strategy for the House of Commons Service 2013-17.



Foreword by the Speaker

The last year has been one of monumental change for Parliament – structurally, historically, and also in terms of its composition. The General Election ushered in 177 new Members of Parliament, plus five returning after a period away from the green benches. This marked the end of a period in which we celebrated a number of historic anniversaries, as well as debated the best way to preserve Parliament for the future.

The Parliament in the Making programme commemorated the 750th anniversary of the de Montfort Parliament and the 800th anniversary of sealing the Magna Carta. Both events were key points in our democratic journey. It was against this backdrop that Parliament considered how best to ensure that not just the fabric of our building but, by extension, what it represents within the context of that democratic heritage is protected for many years to come.

There is a sense, as the old saying goes, that for things to stay the same, everything must change. However, it is also true that if 750 years of history have taught us anything, it is that change is vital to the health of our democracy. In January 2015, the Governance of the House Committee published its report. I am delighted that the Committee's recommendations were endorsed by the House, and I am very grateful to staff for their hard work in ensuring a swift implementation and for their patience during this transition. The changes we are making today will provide a substantial foundation from which better to manage the challenges that face the Parliament of tomorrow.

We have also seen a number of changes to our Management Board, including the appointment of David Natzler as Clerk of the House of Commons, of Penny Young as Librarian and Director General of Information Services and of Rob Greig as the first Director of the Parliamentary Digital Service.

These new arrangements represent just the first chapter in a new way of thinking for the House. In particular, while we have always been here to serve the public, this year we have been more open to the public than ever before. This change has physically manifested itself in the preparations to open the new Parliamentary Education Centre, which will double the number of young people who can visit Parliament every year. We have also increased the number of tours available, opened a public ticket office and made our dining rooms available to the public for use during recess as well as redesigning the Jubilee Shop in Westminster Hall. Parliament does not belong to politicians; we have the honour of being chosen by our constituents to serve them in this place, which is as rightfully theirs as it is ours.

In terms of making Parliament more accessible online, we have used technology to drive forward cost-saving initiatives such as digitalising parliamentary questions and answers, and have used social media platforms to gather evidence for committee inquiries and engage the public in new ways. The Speaker's Commission on Digital Democracy supported these initiatives and provided the impetus for the House to continue to drive forward technological innovation to improve scrutiny and communication with constituents.

We have also brought the Commons to the small and big screen in new ways, trialling and adopting new and engaging camera angles in the Chamber, broadcasting the four-part BBC documentary series, *Inside the Commons*, and allowing more filming within Parliament to show the Palace to new audiences. While our democratic home may be physically in Westminster, our democracy reaches far beyond the Thames and I am grateful to the staff of the House for their tireless work in supporting this work and look forward to the year ahead.

Rt Hon John Bercow MP
Speaker



Introduction by the Clerk of the House

This has been a year of change, with both the General Election and changes to our internal operations, but also a year of progress in many areas.

There have been significant changes to the governance structures in the House in the course of 2014-15. The House established a Committee in September 2014 to review the Governance of the House of Commons. The Committee reported in December, and following the House's approval of the report in January 2015, work has progressed on implementing its recommendations. The new Commission has recently been established and has agreed that the Management Board should be succeeded by a new Executive Committee. Further developments are underway: we hope soon to appoint a Director General (who will chair the Executive Committee); a review of joint working with the House of Lords is in progress; further improvements to the digital support provided to both Houses will be made following the formation of the Parliamentary Digital Service on 1 April 2015. Despite the uncertainty arising from these changes, staff have continued to provide a high level of service to Members throughout the year and I am proud of the contribution they have made.

We have taken further steps to harness technology to support parliamentary processes. The new online Q&A system went live in autumn 2014 and has improved the accessibility of Parliamentary Questions and Answers, both to Members and the wider public. We have also been expanding our use of social media to engage the public in the work of Select Committees, as well

as modernising websites and experimenting with innovative ways of presenting reports using more audio-visual material. The Library has continued to provide excellent research support to Members, answering nearly 27,000 enquiries and producing 67 research papers, as well as expanding the range of standard notes available online to more than 4,000. Co-location of Library research staff and Committee teams has expanded, with most now co-located, bringing a range of benefits.

Our catering service continues to provide a diverse range of meals at outlets across the Parliamentary Estate, while delivering significant cost savings, with more than 1.4 million meals served during the course of the year. For the first time we have opened up the Members' Dining Room to the public, offering a chance for people to experience the excellent food created by our chefs in a truly unique environment. Feedback from guests has been very positive and we look forward to welcoming more people in the coming year.

Work has been completed on an independent options appraisal for the restoration and renewal of the Palace of Westminster, and this has now been published. A Joint Committee will now consider the options and agree the way forward. In the meantime, work continues on a range of major and minor projects across the estate to ensure that our buildings continue to provide a safe, suitable working environment. Work on such projects is also supplemented by our maintenance team, who completed nearly 39,000 reactive work requests in 2014-15.

The Fixed-term Parliaments Act meant that for the first time the date of the election was known well in advance, bringing a level of certainty and allowing a greater degree of planning than has previously been possible. The General Election Planning Group worked throughout the year to plan and deliver activities and services for new and departing Members. More than ever before this work was tailored to the views of Members themselves – influenced by the conclusions of the Administration Committee’s Report from September 2013, First Weeks at Westminster, and the results of the Members and Members’ Staff Interview Project. I am delighted that this work has had such a positive impact on Members who joined the House following the 2015 election.

Our savings programme closed in 2014, but we are committed to continuing the successful work undertaken as part of that programme to improve effectiveness and drive innovation. A bicameral Continuous Improvement team has been established to drive process reviews across Parliament. Some improvements have already resulted from this work and I am confident that we will see further fruits of this work in the coming year.

Our status as a heritage site also continues to grow. We had more than 200,000 commercial visitors in 2014/15, and have improved a number of aspects of the visitor experience – introducing audio guides (including an audio tour aimed at families); opening a new ticket office in Portcullis House; and delivering a new ticketing system. The quality of the visitor experience was recognised through winning the ‘Best Guided Tour’ at the Group Leisure awards. Nearly 45,000 students and adults from 1,850 schools visited Parliament on its core education programmes, and an

additional 39,000 attended school tours. We continue to reach out to schools which have less contact with Parliament and work undertaken during the course of the year to build a new Education Centre will help us go further in this area, allowing many more students to visit Parliament.

We have also made further progress on developing a more open and diverse House Service. Our four workplace equality networks – driven by staff who volunteer their time and energy – have continued to flourish in 2014/15, with ParliREACH developing a reverse mentoring scheme and ParliOUT gaining external recognition for its work, winning two awards. The Role Models campaign, launched in March 2015 by all four networks, aims to raise the reputation of Parliament as an inclusive place to work and encourage people to consider us as an employer and I hope that though this campaign and others we can drive further change in the coming year.

One of the pleasures and challenges of working for the House is that it involves a balancing act between change and continuity. In terms of our governance arrangements, the last year featured a significant degree of change – change which we are still working through. At the same time, the majority of staff were concerned primarily with the ongoing daily business of ensuring the House, its Members and our visitors were well served. I know they are rightly proud of that service, and that there is a general will to raise the standard of it even further: given the quality and commitment of colleagues here I am confident that we will be able to do so and that we will continue to build on our successes during the course of 2015-16.

David Natzler
Clerk of the House

House of Commons Commission, July 2015



Rt Hon John Bercow MP
The Speaker
Chair



Sir Paul Beresford MP



Tom Brake MP
Spokesman



Nicholas Brown MP



Angela Eagle MP



Rt Hon Chris Grayling MP
Leader of the House



Stewart Hosie MP



David Natzler
Clerk of the House



Dame Janet Gaymer#



Barbara Scott#

Dame Janet Gaymer and Barbara Scott, former external members of the Management Board, are attending the Commission by invitation pending the appointment of its own external members.

Executive Committee, July 2015



David Natzler
Clerk of the House
Acting Chair*



Myfanwy Barrett
Director of Finance



John Benger
Clerk Assistant and
Director General
of Chamber and
Committee Services



John Borley CB
Director General
of Facilities



Rob Greig
Director of Parliamentary
Digital Service
Joint department



Andrew Walker
Director General of
Human Resources
and Change



Penny Young
Librarian and Director
General of Information
Services

*The Director General, House of Commons, will chair the Executive Committee on arrival

HOW THE HOUSE IS GOVERNED

The framework for the governance of the House of Commons was established by the *House of Commons (Administration) Act 1978* which set up the House of Commons Commission. The Commission employs the staff of the House, ensures that their terms and conditions remain broadly in line with those of civil servants, appoints an Accounting Officer, lays the Estimate (budget) for House of Commons services and determines the structure and functions of the departments of the House. The Act also requires publication of this annual report.

The membership of the Commission is specified in section 1(2) of the *House of Commons (Administration) Act*. At the beginning of the financial year it was as follows:

- The Speaker, the Rt Hon John Bercow MP (by virtue of his office) (Chairman);
- The Leader of the House, the Rt Hon Andrew Lansley CBE (by virtue of his office);
- Ms Angela Eagle MP (Shadow Leader of the House of Commons, nominated by the Leader of the Opposition);
- Rt Hon John Thurso MP (Commission spokesman) (also Chair of the Finance and Services Committee);
- Sir Paul Beresford MP;
- Frank Doran MP.

In July 2014 the Rt Hon William Hague was appointed as Leader of the House of Commons in the place of Andrew Lansley. The Commission is attended by the Clerk of the House. The Secretary of the Commission was Robert Twigger and the Assistant Secretary was Liz Otto until September 2014 and Sarah Heath thereafter.

Members of the Commission are also members of the Members Estimate Committee (MEC), which is responsible for oversight of certain expenditure in respect of Members, for which a separate report and accounts are published.

Governance Committee

On 10 September 2014 the House agreed to establish a select committee, under the Chairmanship of Rt Hon Jack Straw, to “...consider the Governance of the House of Commons, including the future allocation of the responsibilities currently exercised by the Clerk of the House and Chief Executive.” The Committee’s report was published on 17 December 2014.¹ It aimed to deliver “a coherent management and strategic leadership structure in which the Member and official elements are properly integrated...” and “clarity to the respective roles of Members and officials”.

¹ HC 692 2014-15



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Meeting of the former Commission, March 2015

With one proviso,² the report's principal recommendations were endorsed by the House on 22 January 2015. These were:

- The House of Commons Commission should have an additional explicit statutory responsibility: to set the strategic framework for the provision of services to the House, its Members and the public.
- To support this enhanced role, and to reflect wider principles of good governance, its membership should be:
 - the current ex officio members (the Speaker (Chair) and the Leader of the House);
 - a nominee of the Leader of the Opposition (usually the Shadow Leader of the House);
 - four backbench members, one from each of the three largest parties and one from the remaining membership, elected by the whole House;
 - two external members; and
 - two official members.
- The separate responsibilities of the Finance and Services Committee and the Administration Committee should be more clearly defined. Finance and Services should become the Finance Committee. The Administration Committee should have no more than 11 members;

² The motion proposed that the chairs of the Finance and Administration Committees should be elected to those posts rather than appointed by the Commission.

- The four backbench Members of the Commission should have portfolio responsibilities, allocated to them by the Commission. For two of them this would include chairing the new Finance and Administration Committees. The other two should take on key strategic priorities;
- The Clerk of the House should remain Head of the House service, appointed by Letters Patent, but should not also be titled Chief Executive;
- A new post of Director General of the House of Commons should be created, reporting to the Clerk but with clearly delineated autonomous responsibilities for the delivery of services;
- The Clerk and the Director General of the House of Commons should be the two official members of the Commission;
- The Management Board should be replaced with an Executive Committee (in effect a sub-committee of the Commission) chaired by the Director General of the House of Commons and comprising in addition the Clerk, the Director of Finance and up to three other officials.

A report on progress with implementation of the report's key recommendation up to 31 March is set out in Annex 2. This includes the agreement by both Houses to the House of Commons Commission Bill which provided for the expanded membership of the Commission and introduced a statutory responsibility to set strategic priorities and objectives in connection with services provided by House Departments

Activities of the Commission

The Commission met thirteen times during the year. Minutes of Commission meetings – the “Decisions” – are published on its pages on the Parliament website. Apart from governance issues, it dealt with a range of administrative and financial matters including:

- Welcoming that the House had achieved its milestones for full accreditation by Citizens UK as a London Living Wage Employer.
- Agreeing a financial remit for the planning round 2015/16 to 2018/19.
- Monitoring progress with construction of the new Education Centre, which is due to open in July 2015, and the services to be delivered through it.
- Agreeing a pay award for staff in the Senior Commons Structure for the three years 2013–2015.
- Agreeing in principle to proceed with refurbishment of four parliamentary buildings located north of Bridge Street and to acquire the necessary additional decant accommodation.
- Agreeing that the Corporate Officers should authorise the release of the Independent Options Appraisal for Restoration and Renewal of the Palace of Westminster in July 2015, and supporting a proposal for a Joint Committee on the Palace of Westminster to be established early in the next Parliament.
- Agreeing a statement of its current practice and procedure.

- Endorsing the two main recommendations of the Jenkins Review of *The Governance of Security for Parliament*:
 - Ultimate responsibility for every aspect of security should lie with the Parliamentary Security Director (PSD), as a single accountable security expert.
 - The Serjeant-at-Arms should retain full responsibility for access; any remaining responsibilities for operational security will be as agreed by the PSD.
- Agreeing that as part of the renewal of the security arrangements with the Metropolitan Police Service, the entire security officer workforce should be brought in house.
- Endorsing the findings of an independent review of the Diversity and Inclusion Scheme 2012-15 and agreeing that a diversity and inclusion scheme for the next three years should be drafted.
- Agreeing that e-cigarettes should only be used in designated outdoor areas.
- Approving an Estimate for 2015/16 and a supplementary Estimate for 2014/15.

Questions to the Commission

Parliamentary Questions addressed to the Commission were answered by John Thurso MP. During the year the Commission replied to 12 oral questions and gave 112 written answers. The Commission also made five written statements: one on the Programme for Restoration and Renewal of the Palace of Westminster and four related to implementation of the Governance Committee's recommendations.

Finance and Services Committee

The Finance and Services Committee of the House of Commons was established by Standing Order No.144. The main functions of the Committee were:

- To prepare the Administration Estimate and Members Estimate for submission to the House of Commons Commission and the Members Estimate Committee respectively.
- To monitor the financial performance of the House Administration.
- To report to the House of Commons Commission, the Members Estimate Committee or the Speaker on the financial and administrative implications of recommendations made to them by other Committees of the House.

In November 2010 the Committee and Commission agreed a new remit for the Committee, within the terms of the standing order, setting out specific areas for the Committee to monitor during the 2010–2015 Parliament including the Savings Programme, major programmes and progress towards meeting environmental targets.

The Committee was chaired by a member of the Commission. This position was held by John Thurso MP who was elected as Chair on 27 July 2010. The Committee had ten other members, including the Chairman of Ways and Means and the Chair of the

Administration Committee. The Committee met 11 times during 2014/15. There were no changes in the Committee's membership during the year.

The Committee's main task each year is to prepare the Administration and Members Estimates for agreement by the Commission. The process starts in early summer when the Committee proposes a financial remit for the Administration Estimate to the Commission for the period of the next Medium-term Financial Plan. On 16 June 2014, the Commission agreed the following remit:

The financial remit for the planning round 2015/16 to 2018/19 assumes zero growth in real terms and that the House will absorb day to day upward cost pressures other than inflation. In agreeing the remit the Commission notes that there should be an on-going challenge to deliver efficiencies through a process of continuous improvement, and suggests that the Finance and Services Committee should continue to look for opportunities to make further efficiencies and ensure value for money in the delivery of services. The Commission also notes that significant enhancements to scrutiny and related functions and the resource implications of major building refurbishments should not necessarily be funded from within existing budgets.

During the autumn, the Committee followed the same process that it had pioneered in 2012/13. In September, an initial draft of the Medium-term Financial Plan was presented to the Committee by the Director of Finance. A revised draft, reflecting the views of the Committee and later information, was presented in October and this formed the basis of a report by the Committee to the House. The report was endorsed by the House on a substantive and amendable motion on 11 November 2014. In light of contributions made in the debate, the Committee presented its final advice on the 2015/16 Estimates to the Commission and the Members Estimate Committee in December.

The Committee also recommended supplementary estimates for both the Administration and Members Estimates in respect of 2014/15. These mainly reflected technical adjustments relating to the value of pension liabilities and the reclassification of some project work from capital to resource.

Following the closure of the Savings programme, the Commission agreed that a Continuous Improvement process, overseen by the Committee, should follow on from the Savings Programme. This is being developed in conjunction with the House of Lords. The Committee received periodic reports on it during the year.

The Committee receives quarterly reports on the House's spending against budget. A particular concern for the Committee in 2013/14 was the emergence of a significant underspend on the capital budget, caused by delays to a number of major works projects. A member of the Committee, Geoffrey Clifton-Brown MP, contributed to a review of the capital forecasting process. The review made a number of recommendations, which were accepted in full by the Parliamentary Estates Board. These included a new methodology for budget setting, better allocation of budgets across accounting periods and greater scrutiny of finances by Senior Responsible Owners. The full benefit of the new approach will be felt in 2015/16.

During the year the Committee received regular reports on security expenditure and associated projects. The Committee was briefed by the Parliamentary Security Director and provided further advice to the Commission on the approach to renewing security arrangements when the current agreement with the Metropolitan Police Service comes to an end in March 2015. The Committee also reviewed progress against the House's environmental targets and considered the annual report of the Speaker's Advisory Committee on Works of Art.

Under the Governance Committee's recommendations (see page 44), the membership and role of the Finance and Services Committee will remain largely unaltered. The main change will be that the distinction between the Finance and Services Committee and the Administration Committee will be made clearer and that the two committees will have equal status in having direct access to the Commission through their respective chairs. This will be achieved partly through revised delegations/remits issued by the Commission in the new Parliament. The change in the Finance and Services Committee's name to the 'Finance Committee' reflects these changes.

Administration Committee

The Administration Committee of the House of Commons is established under Standing Order No. 139. Its main functions are:

- To consider the services and facilities provided by and for the House of Commons to Members and to the public.
- To make recommendations to the Commission, Members Estimate Committee and the Speaker regarding House services and facilities.

The Committee's remit covers areas such as: catering services; visitor services; the education service; retail services; digital services; the broadcasting of Parliament; rules of access; and the management of the buildings and facilities which make up the Parliamentary Estate.

In the 2010 Parliament, the Committee was chaired by Sir Alan Haselhurst MP, and consisted of 16 Members. It met 22 times in 2014/15.

Customer service for Members and their staff was at the heart of much of the work the Committee was involved in this year, including the following initiatives:

- Following the Committee's report on induction arrangements for new MPs in September 2013 it spent valuable time in 2014/15 supporting the House Service in its preparations for new Members arriving after the General Election. Several members of the Committee were part of the House-wide General Election Planning Group and the Committee regularly advised officials on the services that would be valued by newly-elected Members.
- At the beginning of the Parliament a member of the Committee is nominated as Chair of the Travel Office Consumer Panel. This year the contract to run the Travel Office was re-let and the Committee had discussions with the new supplier to ensure that the contract met the needs of Members.

- The Committee heard from Departments across the House about how they were responding to feedback obtained in a series of interviews conducted with Members and their staff about the services of the House. This interview project provided an opportunity for the House and Committee to hear considered views from colleagues about what worked well and what could be improved.

Since 2010 the Committee has been involved in work to widen public access to and engagement with Parliament, and this work continued to develop. This has involved a number of projects:

- In February 2015 the documentary on the work of the House *'Inside the House of Commons'*, which the Committee had recommended to the Commission in July 2013, was broadcast. Following the Committee's recommendation that appropriate commercial filming should be permitted on the Estate in non-sitting times another filming project, called *'The Coalition'*, took place.
- The Committee held several sessions on Parliament's current broadcasting arrangements. In February 2015 the Committee recommended the use of two new low-level cameras in the Chamber positioned on the officials' boxes behind the Speaker's Chair. This followed a trial supported by broadcasters. The footage provides new, more engaging views of Members which can be integrated with current footage to show the business in the Chamber in a more dynamic way.
- As part of income generation plans, the Committee recommended the commercial hire of banqueting facilities for third parties in 2013. This allowed, for the first time, people to book facilities in the Palace without the need to be sponsored by a Member. Demand for this service has continued to grow and has been monitored by the Committee. In addition, the Committee approved the first ever 'public dining event' which took place in November 2014. Members of the public were able to book a set lunch in Members' Dining Room during the short recess, without the need to be with a pass holder. The event was successful and will be repeated.

The Committee also received regular updates from Departments across the House on a range of topics, including information on the development of a digital Order Paper and the new Questions and Answers system; the expansion of retail product ranges; the continued digitisation of the Annunciator Service which now allows regional stations and broadcast feeds from devolved legislatures to be viewed; progress with the new Education Centre; improving search facilities at Cromwell Green Entrance; and signage in the Palace.

On 10 March 2015 the House agreed changes to Standing Order No.139 which will reduce the membership of the Committee to 11 and its quorum to three from the start of the 2015 Parliament. This followed a recommendation by the Committee on House of Commons Governance.

Administration Estimate Audit Committee

The Commission appoints the members of the AEAC and approves its terms of reference. The AEAC's annual report is on pages 57–62.



Management Board

At the beginning of the financial year management of the House of Commons Service was delegated by the Commission to the House of Commons Management Board under the leadership of the then Clerk of the House and Chief Executive, Sir Robert Rogers KCB. He was Accounting Officer, Corporate Officer and Data Controller, and was responsible for ensuring proper stewardship of resources and for maintaining an appropriate system of internal controls.

Sir Robert Rogers retired at the end of August 2014. From that date David Natzler, then Clerk Assistant, assumed the responsibilities of Accounting Officer, Corporate Officer and Data Controller. David Natzler was appointed Acting Clerk in October 2014 and – after an open competition – was appointed as Clerk by Letters Patent on 23 March 2015. As per the recommendation of the Governance Committee (see above) the Clerk is no longer Chief Executive, and responsibility for the delivery of services will pass to the new Director General, House of Commons, once appointed.

The Management Board's role was to lead the House of Commons Service by setting its strategic aims, priorities, values and standards, in accordance with the decisions of the House of Commons Commission; approving business and financial plans, ensuring controls, managing risk, monitoring performance and making corporate policy decisions. Minutes of Management Board meetings are available on its pages on the Parliament website.

In addition to the Clerk, the other members of the Management Board were the heads of the five House Departments and Parliamentary ICT (acting heads of department who attended the Board during the year are shown in italics):

- David Natzler (Chamber and Committee Services, and Clerk Assistant) (until October 2014)
 - *Jacqy Sharpe (October 2014 – June 2015)*
- John Borley CB (Facilities)
- Myfanwy Barrett (Finance)
- Andrew Walker (Human Resources and Change)
- John Pullinger CB (Information Services, and Librarian) (until June 2014)
 - *Dr John Bengier (July 2014 – May 2015)*
- Joan Miller (Parliamentary ICT) (until September 2014)
 - *Matthew Taylor (October 2014 – March 2015)*

The Management Board also had two external non-executive members: Barbara Scott and Dame Janet Gaymer DBE. Dame Janet chaired the Management Board from September 2014, following the retirement of Sir Robert Rogers.

STRATEGY FOR THE HOUSE OF COMMONS SERVICE

The strategy for the House of Commons Service for 2010-15 was reviewed by the Management Board during 2012/13, and in February 2013 the Commission endorsed a ‘refreshed’ strategy that covers the period 2013-17. This is published on the internet.³

Our vision is that:

- The House of Commons will be valued as the central institution in our democracy: effective in holding the Government to account, scrutinising legislation, and representing the diverse views of the electorate. It will be seen both in the UK and abroad as a model of good practice and innovation, and will provide value for money.
- Members of Parliament will have the information, advice, support and technology they need to be effective in their work and to engage closely with their constituents.
- The House Service will have the respect of Members of Parliament and of the public for our independence, integrity and professionalism, and for our commitment to making Parliament work ever more effectively. We will be seen as efficient, responsive, diverse and inclusive. We will feel proud to work here and confident that our contribution is valued.
- We will be engaged on an agreed plan of work to ensure both that the Palace of Westminster is preserved for future generations and that Parliament has the accommodation it needs to operate in a modern democracy.

To achieve our vision we have four strategic goals:

- 1) TO MAKE THE HOUSE OF COMMONS MORE **EFFECTIVE**.
- 2) TO MAKE THE HOUSE SERVICE MORE **EFFICIENT**.
- 3) TO ENSURE THAT MEMBERS, STAFF AND THE PUBLIC ARE **WELL-INFORMED**.
- 4) TO WORK AT EVERY LEVEL TO EARN **RESPECT** FOR THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

³ <http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/offices/commons/management-board/management-board-publications1/hoc-strategy/>

MAKING THE HOUSE OF COMMONS MORE **EFFECTIVE**

Supporting the House in implementing reforms to the way in which the Government is held to account and in strengthening the scrutiny of legislation

Chamber

The new Order Paper portal and application went live in February 2015. This introduces for the first time an electronic workflow system for the management and composition of the Order Paper – the daily agenda for the House of Commons. The final Order Paper of the last Parliament (26 March 2015) was the first to be produced completely ‘in system’ and without recourse to any hard copy inputs. Implementation will continue in the new Parliament; full realisation of benefits will depend on the contributions of all those involved in the process.

In 2013, a legislative drafting, amending and publishing programme (LDAPP) was set up to test the feasibility of a browser-based drafting tool for legislation that could more effectively support the drafting, amending and publication of legislation from the start to the end of the legislative process. The programme involves six partners: the House of Commons, House of Lords, the Scottish Parliament; the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel; the Scottish Government’s Parliamentary Counsel Office; and The National Archives. A good deal of work was done by the partners in 2014/15 in preparation for the beta phase, as a result of which the Programme is in good shape to move forward. The timetable for procurement was reviewed during 2014/15 and the current target for procurement of the Beta version is the first quarter of 2015/16. The Commons and Lords members of the LDAPP Board obtained approval from the Parliamentary Business Programme Oversight Group for the UK Parliament’s continuing financial contribution to the Beta development.

Parliamentary Questions and Early Day Motions (EDMs)

The new Questions & Answers (Q&A) system went live in autumn 2014 and allows Members of both Houses and all Answering Bodies to electronically exchange questions for written answer, their associated answers, Notices of Ministerial Statements and Written Statements. In addition to the benefits for Members and Answering Bodies, the new system also means questions can be published straight to the website – thus improving access to information for the public as well.

Committees

The co-location and collaboration programme realises a long-held ambition for closer working between the staff on select committee teams and those in Library research teams, to improve support for the scrutiny work of the House. The accommodation programme itself is nearing completion, but there will be on-going work to make sure that the planned benefits are realised. The final office moves will be completed during July and August 2015.

In September 2014 the Liaison Committee agreed to a package of measures to enhance select committees' capacity: either by providing additional staff (e.g. media officers or to provide support to chairs) or by providing additional budget (e.g. to commission research or provide training for committee members) subject to this funding being ring-fenced for the intended purposes and subject to evaluation. They also agreed to provide additional resources for the Research Directorate of the Department of Information Services, in part to enable Library staff to provide greater specialist support to Select Committees. In total, some £900,000 has been added to the budget for 2015/16 for this purpose, and £1.15 million per year in subsequent years.

The proposal to transfer responsibility for resourcing the Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament from the Cabinet Office to the two Houses of Parliament was put on hold, following the withdrawal of the Committee's support for the change. We expect the Government will wish to discuss the way forward with the new Committee when appointed.

Developing new ways to represent the diverse views of the electorate

The Speaker's Commission on Digital Democracy was established in December 2013 to consider, report and make recommendations on how parliamentary democracy in the United Kingdom could embrace the opportunities afforded by the digital world to become more effective in:

- Representing the people.
- Making laws.
- Scrutinising the work and performance of Government.
- Encouraging citizens to engage with democracy.
- Facilitating dialogue amongst citizens.

The Commission started its work in January 2014 and a year later its report 'Open Up!' was published, the culmination of a year's worth of events and meetings, talking to people across the UK about how to use digital technology to improve parliamentary democracy.

The Commission was keen to reach out to people and held over a hundred informal meetings and over twenty round-table discussions around the country. They spoke to a wide range of people, including experts from the technology industry, young people, voluntary organisations, adults with learning difficulties, academics, people with visual and hearing impediments, civil servants, marketing and public relations experts.

The work of the Digital Democracy Commission was reported widely in the press and online channels, and the report was very well received by expert commentators. The Commission's recommendations ranged from making parliamentary language easier to understand, to calling for electors to be given the option of secure online voting by 2020.

In March 2015 the House of Commons Commission received an update on implementation of the report's recommendations. The Management Board is keen to ensure progress on implementation of recommendations directed at the House Service, once endorsed by the Commission and/or the House.

Influencing decisions on constitutional and procedural change, and being read to respond to the outcomes

The Procedure Committee's report on Revision of Standing Orders was published on 9 March 2015 and is now awaiting consideration by the House.

Ensuring a safe and secure working environment

A safe and secure working environment is crucial if Parliament is to perform its functions of scrutinising the Government and passing legislation effectively. At the same time, demands for accessibility are high, especially as the way in which we use the Palace starts to change as we engage in more income generation.

Business resilience and business continuity

During 2014/15 a new bicameral Relocation Contingencies Programme was established. This is reviewing existing contingency plans, identifying the requirements for the relocation of either or both Houses of Parliament on a range of different scales and for different durations.

Other developments with business resilience and contingency planning included the following:

- In September 2014 Parliament was awarded full certification against the ISO standard for business resilience (ISO 22301) by the British Standards Institution.
- Working with staff in Parliamentary Estates and PICT, and also various external suppliers, to strengthen IT and utility resilience.
- Working with the City of Westminster and the emergency services to deliver a schedule of emergency exercises on the Parliamentary Estate.



Access and security

To address the significant queues while entering the Parliamentary Estate, a temporary marquee for search and screening was installed at St Stephen's Entrance whilst Cromwell Green Entrance was redesigned and remodelled. The capacity of throughput has increased the number of people who can be searched at the Cromwell Green Entrance from 350 per hour to over 800.

A new team of Doorkeepers has been employed to take over four police and security officer posts within the Parliamentary Estate. In addition to significant cost savings, the use of dedicated House staff on these posts helps to ensure that they can become experts in their areas, know their customers (Members and House staff), can enforce rules (access, parking and photography) and challenge those who are unfamiliar, thus improving security.

MAKING THE HOUSE ADMINISTRATION MORE **EFFICIENT**

Continuous improvement

In 2014/15 the former Savings Programme was formally closed and governance arrangements put in place for a new bicameral Continuous Improvement (CI) team. This team was created to promote a culture of continuously analysing and making improvements to the way we work. It provides guidance and training to managers and staff in both Houses, to prepare them to lead or participate in CI reviews, as well as monitoring the progress of CI Reviews; evaluating and reporting on their impact on business performance. A network of advocates was established and 164 in-house practitioners were trained (exceeding the original target of 90).

Improving our management of resources

Finance

Improvements were made to the financial planning round in 2014/15, which, for the first time, included offices outside the main departmental structure, thus ensuring coverage of all service areas. The planning round also included a review of Departmental ICT requirements and a more integrated approach to examining fees and charges.

Staff in the Financial Management Directorate have led work on improving financial management across the House Service. This included providing support in the development of business cases and working to improve forecasting. A review of resource forecasting was undertaken with Departments. New processes have been agreed, and the more robust approach to forecasting is leading to a greater understanding of financial sensitivities, which is improving the quality of reporting to the Management Board. A review of capital forecasting in the Parliamentary Estates Directorate was also undertaken.

The upgrade to our finance and HR system (HAIS – House Administrative Information System) did not realise all the benefits intended. Staff in the finance and HR functions and in PICT made considerable efforts to ensure that the difficulties encountered did not affect key day-to-day services. Further development work is ongoing.

Procurement

On 1 April 2014 the Parliamentary Procurement and Commercial Service (PPCS) was formally established. This provides a service for both Houses and PICT, and is based in the House of Lords. During 2014/15 the PPCS developed new bicameral procurement and contract management rules for Parliament which were agreed by both Management Boards.

Library resources

In preparation for the co-location of the Library's Research and select committee teams (see page 19), the opportunity has been taken to review our physical holdings. We have relocated nearly 600 linear metres of stock and weeded a further 610 linear metres.

Alongside this, 750 archive boxes of material have been sent to secure, environmentally-controlled storage facilities offsite. This leaves approximately 365 metres of stock to move in 2015/16, once the remaining staff moves are complete.

In addition to the work on co-location, staff have also been moving our holdings out of cellars in the palace of Westminster in order to allow the installation of new fire suppression equipment. So far, around 850 metres of material has already been moved, with more planned for 2015/16. Where material is no longer required by the Library, staff work hard to find alternative homes for it with other suitable institutions.

This amounts to a major change in the way we hold and retrieve stock, and we will monitor the effectiveness of the new arrangements.

Catering performance

The Catering Service provides catering and event management for Members and their guests, staff and contractors working on the Parliamentary Estate, and visitors to the Houses of Parliament. It operates 17 venues across four buildings, offering a diverse range of facilities including self-service and fine dining restaurants, bars, cafes and coffee bars. It provides nearly 1.5 million meals annually; with over 8,000 customers using the service on a typical working day, from early in the morning until late at night.



The changes introduced as part of the recent business improvement programme are now beginning to produce tangible benefits, both in delivering significant financial savings and in service improvements. The cost of catering for 2014/15 was £2.4 million: a reduction of 53% on 2013/14.⁴ The results from cafeteria surveys and ‘mystery shopper’ visits also indicate that customer satisfaction is good.

Income generation

Commercial tours

From April 2014 visitors have had the choice of an audio-guided tour or a premium guided tour. A family audio guide was added in June 2014. Premium tours with afternoon tea have proved popular, with over 6,000 teas served in 2014/15. In 2014/15 over 200,000 commercial visitors were welcomed, making a net contribution to House of Commons overheads of £310,000. The quality of the visitor experience was recognised through winning the ‘Best Guided Tour’ at the Group Leisure awards, and being awarded a TripAdvisor ‘Certificate of Excellence’.

A new Ticket Office opened in Portcullis House in July 2014 with a prime location and better service for visitors. The Ticket Office is open daily Monday to Saturday. A new ticketing system was launched in October 2014; bringing this function in-house will halve ticketing costs, saving Parliament around £200,000 per annum in future years.



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⁴ The cost of catering reported for 2013/14, excluding an accounting adjustment and voluntary exit costs, was £4.5m.

Retail

A new visitor shop was opened at the end of the Visitor Route outside the Jubilee café. New initiatives were trialled including Christmas and summer fayres, and pop-up shops across the Parliamentary Estate. New product lines were introduced, retail turnover increased by 14% and average visitor spend increased by 11%, resulting in a net contribution to overheads of £46,000. A new retail management system was procured, which will lead to improved management information and stock control.

It was intended to locate a new, larger Parliament Shop on the ground floor of the refurbished office building 53 Parliament Street. However, following a further review of the security risks, it was decided not to locate the shop within this building. Alternative options for retail premises are currently being examined.

A greener, more sustainable Parliament

Performance against our annual environmental targets for the year was mixed. For carbon emissions, we aimed to achieve a reduction of 17.8% relative to the 2008/09 baseline. In practice the reduction was 16.5%. While our energy consumption fell year-on-year, an increase in the proportion of carbon used in the country's electricity generation meant that this was not sufficient to meet our carbon target. In 2014/15 we exceeded our target for water reduction, but we missed targets for reductions in the volume of waste and for increases in the proportion recycled.

Nevertheless, we are confident of meeting our long-term targets. During 2014/15 we have undertaken various work and projects to help us improve our environmental performance.

Having previously concentrated on 'back room' improvements to help with energy saving, in 2014/15 the focus shifted to an engagement programme to raise awareness of energy saving and change behaviour of the occupants of the Parliamentary Estate. While the large number of contributory factors affecting our energy use mean it is impossible to calculate the specific impact of the engagement programme, we can say that it helped reduce our electricity usage by more than 2% over the year.

Automated meter readers (AMRs) have now been installed on the Palace mains water supplies to remove the need to physically access the meters. These AMRs send electronic alerts when unusual water flow is detected and will thus prevent ongoing leaks being undetected in future. Parliament achieved the Carbon Trust Water Standard certification for its performance from April 2014 onwards.

We were advised that introducing our own beehives was impracticable due to the large number of hives already in the Westminster area, and that planting to support the existing pollinator population would be more beneficial. Bee and butterfly friendly planting is therefore being introduced in the green spaces within our control. Lavender plants have been sited on the Roof Terrace of the Palace, and at 7 Millbank.

For more information about environmental performance, see the Sustainability Report in Annex 5 (pages 54–56).

Securing the long-term future of the Parliamentary Estate

A contract was awarded in December 2013 to a consortium of specialist companies to undertake an independent options appraisal (IOA) for the restoration and renewal of the Palace of Westminster. This work was completed according to plan, and publication of the report was timed to coincide with the new Parliament.

While the IOA provides detailed information to help the two Houses make a broad decision in principle, further studies are also required to support the more detailed planning and design process that must follow that decision. These studies have been drawn together into a package of work which is currently under way. They do not predict the selection of a particular scenario but have commenced to ensure Parliament is ready to commission design work once a decision has been made, which, in turn, will keep the Programme on track for a potential 2020/21 start date. The studies include planning how the service infrastructure of the Palace will relate to the rest of the Parliamentary Estate and further developing Parliament's requirements in areas such as access and visitor management.

In 2014/15 work continued with the planning phase of the Northern Estate Programme, which is for the concurrent refurbishment of the Norman Shaw buildings, 1 Derby Gate and 1 Parliament Street. This work is necessary due to the age and fragility of the buildings' mechanical and electrical services; poor environmental performance; and fire safety shortcomings. The House has acquired the lease on a building in Victoria Street for potential use as decant accommodation for House staff while the refurbishment work is underway. Accommodation in 7 Millbank is also due to be refurbished and reconfigured to provide decant space for Members. This is however, a less than ideal arrangement, and alternatives involving the Government estate are also under consideration. Preparations are being made to refurbish accommodation in 1 Canon Row ahead of the main Northern Estate Programme, so that our ICT servers and audio video equipment can be relocated from 7 Millbank.

Refurbishment work on 53 Parliament Street (for Members' office accommodation) was completed during 2014/15. Significant progress was also made with a number of other projects over the past year, including conservation work in Westminster Hall; restoration of encaustic tiles in the Palace of Westminster; lighting upgrades, and improvements to fire detection and voice alarm systems.

The Maintenance Section is responsible for all maintenance and some capital projects on the Parliamentary Estate. Reactive maintenance is provided by a 24 hour, 7 days a week helpdesk service which receives, logs and resolves day to day requirements. During 2014/15, the PED Maintenance Section completed nearly 39,000 reactive work requests.

ICT Strategy Programme

2014/15 was the final year of the current ICT Strategy Programme. Three of the key strands of this programme are outlined below.

Improved access to services

The rollout of Office 365 and Office 2013 to staff and Members – over 7,000 mailboxes in total – took place in the spring and summer of 2014. Office 365 and Office 2013 offer significant benefits to users including a much larger email box (50GB), an easier to use login process, and access to email and Office functionality anytime, anywhere and on any device. It is recognised that there is more to do in realising the benefits of the Office 365 suite and work will continue on this into 2015/16.

Delays to the ICT Strategy programme and changes to deliverables deferred the savings and also meant others will not be achieved (largely due to technical issues preventing the decommissioning of some services). Despite this, savings targets were achieved as a whole and staff numbers reduced. This has proved to be at the expense of service levels in some areas since the workload has not reduced in the way it was originally envisaged. Recent staff and Member surveys indicate that customers are not happy with response times on the service desk and the consistency of the advice they receive. PICT has made changes to the service desk rota and identified funding in 2015/16 to supplement existing staffing so that busy periods are better staffed.

Network

To ensure that we maximise the benefits of the improvements outlined above, we have updated our network infrastructure during 2014/15. Network switches have been upgraded; wireless access is now available across the Parliamentary Estate for both internal and guest access. This is helping to make mobile and flexible working possible. Network access control infrastructure has also been installed, which again is helping to promote flexible working.

Online customer services

'PICT Online' was launched in summer 2014, providing the means for users to log issues or service requests with the Service Desk online in addition to by telephone. Progress with requests can be monitored by the user in real time. By the end of 2014/15 7% of requests were logged online. Another customer-focused development is the proactive publication of service announcements via PICT Online, allowing users to see whether any services are disrupted. Taken together these developments should reduce the volume of calls to the Service Desk, allowing others to be answered more quickly.



In-house software development

The Rapid Apps Team was set up to produce prototypes and beta sites of software services with potential benefits to either House. The team uses ‘agile’ methods to work closely with colleagues in both Houses to develop digital services that offer a new and innovative way of addressing a user need. The work of the team comes from colleagues across both Houses and via the Innovation Design and Feasibility (ID&F) steering board.

One such example of this work in 2014/15 included General Elections Online (GEO). Ahead of the 2015 General Election, Rapid Apps worked with the Social & General Statistics Section of the Commons Library to produce a new site that was used to display detailed information about election results to a wide audience and in an interactive form. The GEO will be the first fully-interactive research paper produced by the Commons Library and will be accessible on tablet and smartphone as well as PC/laptop.

Preparing for the new Parliamentary Digital Service

Following a review of online services in 2013, the Management Boards of both Houses agreed in March 2014 to establish a new Parliamentary Digital Service, bringing together the management of all online and ICT services into a single organisation. This would be headed by a newly-appointed Director of Digital.

Plans to merge PICT (a joint department) with the Web and Intranet Service (part of the Department of Information Services in the Commons) were developed during 2014/15, led by a Digital Services Preparation Team. This team worked closely not only with staff from PICT and WIS but also with departments across both Houses. A new Director of Parliamentary Digital Services, Rob Greig, was appointed and took up post in March 2015. The new Digital Service formally came into being on 1 April 2015. Further development work, including the creation of a new Digital Strategy, will continue into 2015/16.

ENSURING THAT MEMBERS, STAFF AND THE PUBLIC ARE WELL-INFORMED

Well-informed Members

Understanding Members' needs

The Members' interview programme of engagement continued in 2014/15 with two studies requested by the Administration Committee; the first looked at issues affecting women Members of Parliament, the second at the experiences of Members standing down or losing their seats ('exit interviews'). The work on women Members was conducted in close collaboration with the chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Women, and focused on what House authorities could do to help address issues identified in the APPG's own well-received report. In all 23 Members (men and women) took part in focus groups or in-depth interviews. Next, the research team conducted 30 interviews with Members who had announced in advance that they were standing down. In addition, 23 Members who had lost their seats agreed to talk to us in the days immediately after the Election. This was a much higher number than anticipated, leading us to recommend that this chance for Members to reflect and feed back becomes a permanent fixture of post-election planning. Both studies will be considered by the new Administration Committee.

Using innovative technologies to improve access to information and research

Our work to provide useful information at the constituency level for MPs and the public continues. In the last year we have started to publish social and economic data for constituencies, which we already produce for the Library's 'My Constituency' app, on the internet using Tableau public. This free software is very flexible and has allowed us to provide data that MPs and the general public can interact with. We call the set of visualisations 'constituency profiles'. We have also collaborated with the University of Durham to produce a Constituency Explorer Tool for data visualisation, and deeper analysis of Census data by constituency.

Support for Members' staff

During 2014/15 we delivered eleven Open Days for Members' staff, attracting approximately 380 delegates in total. The programme included:

- Two events for Westminster-based staff.
- Nine pilot events delivered outside of London across the UK (Manchester, Exeter, Perth, Belfast, Swansea, Birmingham, Gateshead, Doncaster and Norwich).

Feedback from these events was very positive and indicated that they were addressing a previously un-met need. The Management Board has agreed to extend the roadshows programme after the General Election and in to 2016. A further 16 roadshows have been

planned between June 2015 and March 2016 in various locations around the country. Consideration will also be given to the services provided to Members' staff on the Estate.

Preparing for the General Election

Planning continued throughout the year in preparation for the General Election in May 2015. Arrangements were heavily influenced by discussions with Members, political parties and the findings of the interview projects carried out by DIS (see page 29). The General Election project completed all of its milestones and received assurance from both internal audit and an external gateway review. Key areas of work included:

The Members' Handbook, Members' Staff Handbook and New Members' Guidebook were revised and published.

- The Dissolution Guidance for Members' staff and the Members' Staff Handbook were revised in response to feedback received from both Members and Members' staff at party briefing events and constituency open days. The Guidance was published in two different versions for the first time: for Standing and non-Standing Members.
- Briefings were provided to the political parties at their request; information was passed on via Member newsletters and a series of stands were displayed in the Portcullis House atrium promoting different aspects of dissolution.
- The emphasis for induction arrangements was on how the House could support Members from the moment they were elected, in line with feedback received from the Administration Committee, Member-representatives on the General Election Planning Group, and Party Whips.
- Ongoing dialogue with the political parties continued throughout the year to refine the Election offering. This helped ensure that the programme of induction, along with the planned Contact Centre and New Member Reception Area matched the needs and expectations of Members.
- Members were also told about the staff buddy scheme which would be a key part of our customer-focused approach.
- Plans were agreed for the IT offering that would be available to newly-elected and returning Members.
- Services for Members who were either standing down or who were not returned were developed. All Members who announced their intention to stand down were contacted by the Members' HR Advice Service, who, with IPSA, could provide advice on employment and pension issues.
- Preparations were made for temporary office accommodation for new Members; and for Members' office moves, together with repairs and redecoration where appropriate.

Staff capability – our People Strategy

The People Strategy was introduced in 2013 to set out the aspirations of the House Service for its staff. The aim is to ensure that we can deliver the corporate strategy for the House Service (see page 17) by maximising the contribution of all our people. The People Strategy brings together our plans for maintaining and increasing our capability as a House Service, and focuses on four areas:

- Engaging staff, ensuring staff have a sense of satisfaction in their jobs and are engaged and involved in making the House and their departments more effective and efficient.
- Supporting management and leadership, setting out clearly the skills and behaviours we expect of our managers and leaders and providing them with the support to meet these expectations.
- Building individual and team capability, working together based on mutual support, trust, and respect
- Organising ourselves and our work efficiently and effectively, to improve the way we do business.

Our priority is for the People Strategy to be embedded across the whole organisation: by individual staff, line managers, departmental managers, and the Department of Human Resources and Change (DHRC). Some of the main achievements during 2014/15 were as follows:

- Introducing revised arrangements for staff performance management (objective setting and appraisals) for paybands A-E in the form of the Individual Performance Review (IPR) process.
- Producing a Good Manager Guide with associated intranet pages, to provide a single source of advice on our expectations of managers and techniques for effective management.
- 75% of staff completed an online competency diagnostic to enable them to assess their current capability against the core competency framework and identify future development needs.
- A new supplier framework was established to deliver our core training programmes.

There are other areas where we have made progress during the year and where work will continue into 2015/16:

- We have started to develop a set of technical competencies to complement the core competency framework.
- We have implemented new time recording processes and policies to provide assurance that people work their contractual hours across the year. We have also made progress in procuring a time recording system; implementation is planned for November 2015.

Well-informed public

Enhancing our digital services

There have been further improvements in select committee websites, and broader experimentation with social media. The web portal for submission of evidence to committees was developed further. Some committee teams experimented with innovative ways of presenting reports using more audio-video material and work is underway to expand the range of formats that reports can be published in online.

Education

We aimed to open our new Education Centre by the end of 2014/15. As a result of delays, firstly with planning consents and then because of the need to divert underground high voltage electricity cables and also to complete archaeological explorations, the Centre will now open in July 2015. This will be an important new resource for school children and their teachers; in a full year it will allow 100,000 school students to visit Parliament annually. The Education Centre will not only double the current capacity, but also provide a far richer visitor experience and much-needed basic facilities such as dedicated toilets and somewhere to eat lunch.



Teacher training and regional education

Parliament's flagship 'Teachers' Institute' programme for those involved in citizenship teaching was extended: 55 teachers took part in the annual summer training week, with a range of talks, activity sessions and events. A second Institute was held for the first time in January 2015 due to demand, which saw a further 47 teachers take part. In addition to this, an additional 590 teachers/trainees and nearly 1,900 students participated in Parliament's continuing professional development and outreach programmes.

The North West England regional schools outreach programme saw over 9,600 students from 81 schools taking part; over 8,000 students from 122 schools participated in the South West England programme, and a North East England programme was established which saw over 1,200 students participate between June and September 2014.

Support for universities

'Parliamentary Studies' is the only higher education module formally approved and co-taught by the Houses of Parliament, and has the support of The Speaker of the House of Commons, the Lord Speaker and the management boards of both Houses.

The module provides final year undergraduate students with a detailed knowledge of how Parliament works in both theory and practice. It is delivered through a partnership between the Houses of Parliament and a university; the university provides academic and theoretical content, and Parliament provides practical teaching about the work, processes and business of Parliament. Building on the success of the first full year in 2013/14 seven new universities were recruited to the programme in 2014/15, bringing the total to twenty.

School visits to Westminster

Nearly 45,000 students and adults from 1,850 schools visited Parliament on its core education programmes. An additional 39,000 attended school tours (booked through the Education Service or Members' offices). We have a commitment to reach out to schools that have less involvement in Parliament, and all school visits during Parliament Week (in November 2014) were prioritised for schools who had never before visited Parliament; due to demand an additional week was similarly reserved in February 2015. Over 78,000 visitors (non-student) visited Parliament via Members' tours. 11,000 visitors climbed the 334 stairs up and down the Elizabeth Tower.

Broadcasting and online video

During 2014/15 we introduced server-based audio/video recording of all public proceedings, replacing video tapes as the default recording medium. Significant improvements have also been made to the online video service. It is now possible to view live and archive video on mobile and tablet devices as well as on a PC. New functionality also allows users to mark the start and end of a speech in the Commons Chamber and share the speech on social media.

WORKING AT EVERY LEVEL TO EARN **RESPECT** FOR THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

Having an open and transparent way of doing business

The Information Rights and Information Security (IRIS) Service is responsible for the House Service's compliance with the Information Acts (Freedom of Information, Data Protection and Environmental Information Regulations). It ensures requests are responded to in line with legislation and also that the publication scheme, which governs the information routinely published, is in place and up to date. Working with the Commons Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO), IRIS is also responsible for delivering a programme aimed at increasing awareness of information security risks and developing advice and guidance. They work closely with the House of Lords, PICT (now the Digital Service) and the Parliamentary Security Director across all these areas.

New legislation (the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012) introduced a requirement to publish re-useable datasets. To meet the House's obligations departments have been briefed and datasets have been identified across the House as a result. The IRIS team have implemented a process of publishing any datasets that form part of an FOI response in re-usable .csv format.

Information Security accreditation continues to grow and a well-designed process is now in place. As at June 2015 29 projects for full accreditation are being managed, and early engagement with departments and directorates is improving.

In 2014/15 some 617 FOI requests were received, of which 583 were responded to in the period covered by this report.⁵ 98.5% of requests were responded to within the statutory deadline of twenty working days. In addition, the IRIS Team also worked with colleagues across the House Service to prepare guidance on dealing with FOI requests during the dissolution of Parliament.⁶

Encouraging public participation in parliamentary business

On 8 May 2014 the House agreed a motion that paved the way for a new approach to petitions to the House of Commons and the Government. It was agreed that a collaborative e-petitions system should be established in the new Parliament, enabling members of the public to petition the House of Commons and press for action from Government.

⁵ The difference between requests received and requests answered is due to timing.

⁶ When Parliament is dissolved it ceases to be an answering body within the meaning of the FOI Act. Therefore FOI requests cannot be answered during this period.

The Procedure Committee published detailed proposals for the new scheme on 4 December 2014. The House agreed to these on 24 February 2015. For the first time, the public will be able to petition the House of Commons electronically. There will be a new e-petitions website, jointly owned by the House of Commons and the Government, overseen by a new Petitions Committee. The Petitions Committee will consider both e-petitions submitted through the new site and paper petitions presented by MPs under existing procedures. It will be able to hear petitioners' concerns and scrutinise the Government's response.

The Procedure Committee hoped that its proposals would significantly enhance the relationship between the petitioning public and their elected representatives and significantly improve the information available to petitioners about what the House of Commons does. Plans have been put in place to ensure that the new Petitions Committee can start its work after the General Election. The Public Bill Office will engage with work arising in 2015/16 from the recommendations of the Digital Democracy Commission on strengthening public participation in the legislative process.

Becoming a more diverse and inclusive organisation

An independent review of our current Diversity & Inclusion Scheme was undertaken in December 2014. Over 400 people responded to a survey and over 40 people participated in qualitative interviews or focus groups. The review found that good progress had been made in all four areas of the scheme. This included more visible leadership, a greater commitment and focus on diversity and inclusion in policy and practice, improvements in the recruitment and development of staff, and better monitoring of progress towards objectives.

There is general agreement that the House Service is getting more diverse, albeit rather slowly. There has been a small increase in the number of women in senior roles, and a little in the progression of minority ethnic staff to similar levels, meaning that our objectives for diversity have not yet been achieved. With limited turnover at the senior level there are few opportunities for staff at the lower pay bands to be promoted to senior posts unless there is a concerted effort to recruit widely for staff with transferable skills and experience and/or to increase efforts with talent management.

The four workplace equality networks (WENs) have continued to flourish in 2014/15, and some of their achievements are outlined below.

- A scheme was launched by the Speaker and Lord Speaker to create the first dementia-friendly Parliament, working alongside ParliAble (the WEN for awareness and appreciation of disability issues).
- ParliREACH (the WEN for race, ethnicity and cultural heritage) has started a reverse mentoring programme.
- Parliagender (the WEN for gender equality issues) has launched a group mentoring pilot for women.
- ParliOUT (the WEN in support of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersexual, and questioning people in Parliament) achieved external recognition through two awards,

PinkNews's 'Employee Network of the Year' and the Inclusive Network's 'Awesome Networks of 2015'.

- The 'Parliamentary Role Models' campaign is a collaboration between all four WENs, and was launched in March 2015. It aims to raise the reputation of Parliament as an inclusive place to work and encourage people to consider us as an employer.

Other successes in the field of diversity and inclusion include the following:

- Seven of the ten House of Commons Apprentices who finished their apprenticeships in summer 2014 have been appointed to roles within the House Service.
- The third cohort of interns (11 people) completed the Speaker's Parliamentary Placement Scheme, with four being successful in applying for jobs with Members or in the House Service, one now working in the private sector and one enrolling at university.

Supporting and learning from the experience of other Parliaments

The House Service, as well as Members, is an active contributor to international parliamentary organisations, and provides procedural support to the plenary sessions of international parliamentary assemblies. Staff maintain good relations with the administrations of the devolved bodies in the UK and with the European and other EU member state parliaments.

In March 2015 the House of Commons hosted the Standing Committee meeting of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly – within budget and to the satisfaction of key stakeholders.

Our programme of support for the Burmese Parliament continued. The secondment of a House of Commons official to Burma was extended, and we have worked with the United Nations Development Programme, the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Department for International Development to develop the programme further.

We have also supported, either directly or through intermediary bodies, the Parliaments of Trinidad and Tobago, Kyrgyzstan, Morocco, Kenya, Iraq, Kuwait, and Namibia among others.

Celebrating Parliament

2015 marks two important anniversaries in the development of our democracy: 800 years since the signing of the Magna Carta in 1215, and 750 years since Simon de Montfort's Parliament in 1265. The 2015 Anniversaries programme 'Parliament in the Making' was launched in January 2015 and is designed to raise awareness of our democratic heritage with Parliament at the heart of the story. By marking Parliament's history in an innovative way that is relevant to contemporary society, the aim is to increase public understanding that Parliament is at the heart of our democracy and that its work matters to everyone. Some of the main events and activities so far have included:



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- An exhibition of banners in Westminster Hall entitled 'the Beginnings of that Freedom'. Each banner depicts the milestones and movements which 'made a difference' in the journey to the rights and representation that exist today.
- On 20 January 2015, the 750th anniversary of the Montfort Parliament, the BBC broadcast 'Democracy Day': a day of live events, discussion and debate broadcast from inside Parliament and the BBC Radio Theatre.
- On 5 February 2015, the four surviving original copies of the 1215 Magna Carta manuscripts were loaned to Parliament for one day by the organisations that hold and display them on a permanent basis.

- A series of short animations were broadcast on digital screens at London Underground stations across Zone 1, spotlighting key historical moments since the sealing of Magna Carta in 1215.
- The 2015 Flag Project invited young people aged 7–11 to design a flag to represent their school, local town or community as part of a project developed to celebrate the 750th anniversary of the Montfort Parliament. Flags designed by schools across the UK have flown in Parliament Square and were displayed at Runnymede at the 15 June 2015 national event.

Other events have been planned for the rest of 2015.

Marking the centenary of the First World War

Autumn 2014 marked the centenary of the start of the First World War. Various events and activities have taken place, including:

- An online exhibition in the ‘Living Heritage’ part of the Parliament website illustrates what was happening in Parliament during the First World War.
- The UK Youth Parliament marked the centenary of the First World War in the House of Commons chamber on Friday 14 November 2014. The sitting started with a speech by Mr Speaker and one minute’s silence, followed by 13 short speeches by members of the Youth Parliament.
- Parliament took part in ‘Lights Out’, a national invitation to everyone in the UK to turn off all lights but one, from 10pm to 11pm on 4 August 2014, to mark the hour that Britain entered WW1 in 1914. The Palace was plunged into darkness with only the lights behind the clock face remaining on.
- The Elizabeth Tower was illuminated with a projection of gently falling poppies to mark Remembrance Day 2014.

The Member advisory group will be planning more activity to commemorate other anniversaries over the next three years.



ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: Data tables

An EFFECTIVE House of Commons					
Sittings of the House	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Number of sitting days	145	143	145	153	150
Average length of sitting days	8hr 0min	7hr 56min	7hr 48min	7hr 27min	7hr 31min
Westminster Hall sitting days	93	97	91	91	104
Average length of Westminster Hall sitting days	3hr 51 min	3hr 59min	4hr 0min	3hr 51min	3hr 44min
Legislation	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Government Bills	31	12	35	31	26
Private Members' Bills	133	92	100	138	138
Private Bills	13	11	7	5	2
General Committee meetings	290	328	365	421	406
Total number of new amendments, new clauses and new schedules tabled	4,164	5,411	3,158	3,856	2,675
Average per sitting day	28.7	37.8	21.8	25.2	17.8
Hansard (General Committees)					
Total number of pages of debates published	8,246	5,594	5,662	6,508	4,716
Columns per significant error (target = 13)	53	44	75	71	68
Statutory Instruments					
Considered by Joint or Select Committee on Statutory Instruments	1,285	853	1,057	1,182	2,230
Special attention of House drawn to	61	91	64	86	98
Regulatory reform					
Proposals and draft orders reported on	2	1	3	5	6
European Scrutiny Committee					
EU Documents scrutinised	1,013	1,138	980	1,136	971
Reported as legally or politically important	454	643	506	608	475
Debates in European Committee	40	35	38	39	24
Debates on the floor of the House	6	10	12	12	7
Joint Committee on Human Rights					
Bills considered	15	5	9	10	7
Special attention of the House drawn to	6	2	3	8	6
Select Committees	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Meetings	896	1,270	1,305	1,452	1,291
Reports (departmental committees only)	77	171	182	185	208
Questions, motions and answers	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Average number of questions dealt with by the Table Office per sitting day	544	515	559	520	466
Number of Members who have used e-tabling facility	357	368	397	400	423
Percentage of questions e-tabled	60%	69%	76%	85%	87%
Total number of written answers published	46,825	48,201	43,338	50,902	41,807
EDMs: average number tabled per week	61	41	41	34	35
EDMs: average number of signatures per week	1,965	1,227	1,055	852	1,020
Hansard	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Total pages of daily part published	23,288	24,360	22,998	23,412	17,620
Average pages published per sitting day	161	170	159	153	117.5
Debate report columns per significant error	25.7	26.0	32.0	37.0	38.5
Average daily print run	1,288	1,222	1,148	1,078	1,060
Daily Vote Bundle					
Average number of pages per sitting day	252	148	131	149	145

Hansard (continued)	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Printing and publishing					
Total expenditure (£m)	10.8	11.8	9.2	9.6	7.7
Health & safety on the Parliamentary Estate (a)	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Appointments with occupational health nurse adviser	294	330	-	341	305
Treatment provided by clinical nurse adviser	1,206	2,010	1,984	2,089	1,301
Medical screenings (Members)	139	116	127	202	94
Staff referrals to physician	199	128	-	-	-
Referrals to physiotherapy (b)	223	287	311	205	23
Referrals to occupational health nurse/physician	493	458	429	388	-
Management referrals	-	-	-	-	406
Staff self referrals	-	-	-	-	78
Welfare appointments	-	-	-	-	546
Accidents causing injury	82	106	117	106	125

An EFFICIENT House Administration

Catering	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Total covers (thousands)	1,480	1,444	1,416	1,474	1,444
Environmental performance	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Energy use per square metre (kWh) (whole Parliamentary Estate)	310.6	312.7	335.7	307.7	296.0
Waste recovered	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Waste recycled	51.7%	53.0%	57.3%	59.0%	62.5%
Parliamentary Network	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Infrastructure availability (working hours)	99.70%	99.70%	99.99%	100.00%	100.00%
Support cases resolved within target (c)	90.6%	94.6%	93.9%	92.1%	87.5%

WELL-INFORMED Members, staff and public

Well-informed Members	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Research papers					
Number of research papers published	82	66	90	80	67
% of briefings available for relevant legislative debate	100%	98%	98%	97%	98%
Research enquiries					
Logged enquiries	19,190	23,679	22,642	23,947	22,523
% of deadlines met	98%	98%	98%	98%	97%
& of undeadlined enquiries within 1 week	85%	87%	87%	87%	85%
& of undeadlined enquiries within 2 weeks	99%	99%	98%	99%	99%
Quicklog enquiries	7,868	8,342	7,748	6,620	4,203
Book and video loans					
Book loans	3,453	3,783	3,695	3,539	2,835
Book loans met from own stock	79%	78%	75%	78%	76%
Tapes and transcripts acquired	42	43	41	35	24
Items supplied by requested date	98%	95%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Library briefings					
Standard notes on intranet at year end (d)	3,313	3,843	4,003	4,082	4,207
Number of debate packs published	187	206	179	222	194
Debate packs available for designated debates 24 hours in advance	87%	76%	93%	86%	75%
No. of library talks	18	16	15	14	17

Notes:

(a) Following a reorganisation of the Parliamentary Safety and Wellbeing Service, data collection about these activities changed from 2014/15 onwards. Some series are not directly comparable with earlier years.

(b) The eligibility criteria for physiotherapy referrals changed in 2014/15.

(c) Figures for 2010/11 and 2013/14 have been revised.

(d) Number published on intranet at the end of each year.

Well-informed Members (continued)	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
'Reach' of Library services (a)					
% of Members with 5+ contacts in a year	93%	93%	94%	88%	86%
% of Members with 10+ contacts in a year	85%	82%	82%	78%	76%
Parliamentary Search (previously PIMS)					
Items added/number of items published (b)	222,725	179,039	175,648	180,347	162,774
Availability during scheduled hours	99.46%	98.54%	100.00%	100.00%	99.90%
Internal Communication					
Intranet requests (million)	9.0	9.6	9.8	9.0	8.5
Well-informed public					
Visitor numbers					
Visitors to Chamber galleries (House of Commons only)	123,468	115,399	121,532	106,403	102,812
Members' tours (both Houses)	122,084	125,798	104,448	137,500	128,424
Summer opening (c)	74,952	87,594	75,998	95,809	93,230
Saturday openings (d)	-	78,119	90,026	110,454	107,167
Information Office					
Telephone enquiries (e)	-	26,618	17,253	12,034	9,926
Email and written enquiries	8,849	8,030	7,533	6,310	5,321
Total enquiries	-	34,648	24,786	18,344	15,247
% calls answered within 20 seconds	-	94%	93%	95%	92%
% enquiries answered within one day	87%	91%	91%	95%	94%
Education Service					
Publications sent out	21,900	45,000	107,656	46,131	30,528
Inward education visits	37,812	41,549	47,082	46,491	44,539
Parliamentary Broadcasting					
Total hours of coverage provided to broadcasters	2,034.5 hrs	2,118.8 hrs	2,179.6 hrs	2,342.2 hrs	2,116.0 hrs
Total hours of audio/video available on Parliamentlive.tv website	3,060.8 hrs	3,490.7 hrs	3,618.3 hrs	3,673.0 hrs	3,474.0 hrs
Archived videotape recordings of proceedings	1,440	1,595	1,612	1,655	1,614
Completed orders for recordings	1,233	986	997	927	1,023
Website					
Requests (million)	52.5	67.2	66.5	70.3	70.9
Freedom of Information					
Number of requests	494	475	504	668	617
% answered within statutory period (20 working days)	98%	98%	97.5%	98%	99%
Well-informed staff					
Staffing					
Number of House and PICT staff on payroll (average over year, including temps and casuals)	1,868	2,003	1,861	2,011	2,038
Number of full-time equivalent House and PICT staff at year end	1,832	1,750	1,766	1,727	1,776
Recruitment					
Internal recruitment exercises	64	105	84	116	142
Internal/external or external only recruitment exercises	53	81	86	128	135
Total	117	186	170	244	277

Notes:

(a) All Library contacts recorded on the enquiries database.

(b) The Parliamentary Search system replaced the PIMS Search and Retrieval system from May 2011 onwards (phased introduction). Previous figures related to items added to the PIMS Content Management Application, however these are broadly comparable to figures for items published/added to the Parliamentary Search system.

(c) From 2011/12 onwards, this includes figures for Saturday openings that occurred within the summer period.

(d) From 2011/12 onwards, this excludes figures for Saturdays during the summer opening period.

(e) Telephone service hours were reduced from 44 hours to 25 hours in September 2012, and further reduced to 20 hours in February 2014.

The table below provides a summary of expenditure in 2014/15. More information can be found in *House of Commons: Administration Resource Accounts 2014/15*, HC 274.

Administration Estimate and Outturn 2014/15

£ million

	Budget	Outturn
Operating income	(16.2)	(14.9)
Staff costs	89.5	89.3
IT services and equipment	8.0	6.8
Communications	4.4	4.4
Information	9.2	8.9
Catering and retail supplies	4.6	3.9
Office supplies	1.0	0.8
Professional services	3.6	4.9
Grants and subsidies	3.7	3.4
Accommodation	49.6	46.1
Security	24.4	23.8
Other	2.3	2.0
sub-total: cash expenditure	184.1	179.5
Depreciation	14.7	16.4
Movement in provisions	0.0	(1.3)
Valuation adjustments	10.8	3.5
Audit fees	0.1	0.1
sub-total: non-cash expenditure	25.6	18.7
TOTAL RESOURCE EXPENDITURE before Pension Transfer	209.7	198.3
Pension transfer		(141.9)
TOTAL RESOURCE EXPENDITURE after Pension Transfer	209.7	56.4
CAPITAL INVESTMENT	38.7	30.7

ANNEX 2:**Progress with implementing key Governance Committee recommendations**

PARA	RECOMMENDATION	PROGRESS
128	We support the suggestion that there should be joint meetings of the House Committee and the Commission at least every six months, and recommend that the Commission approach the House Committee.	A first joint meeting of the Commission and the House Committee has been scheduled for October 2015. The agenda will include consideration of opportunities for greater joint working and strategic security matters.
130	We encourage the two Houses to begin the process of drawing up a phased medium term programme towards a single bicameral services department supporting the primary parliamentary purposes of each of the two Houses.	Preparatory work to inform the former discussion is being undertaken by officials.
140	The Commission should be additionally responsible under statute for setting the strategic framework for the delivery of services to Members, staff and the public, without prejudice to the right of the House to control its own procedures; its members should be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — the Speaker, the Leader of the House and the Shadow Leader of the House (as at present); — four other Members, one from each of the three largest parties represented in the House and one from the remaining membership, elected for a Parliament by the whole House; — two external members appointed by fair and open competition (and confirmed by motion in the House); and, — two official members. [The official members would be the Director General of the House of Commons and the Clerk of the House.] 	These changes are provided for in the House of Commons Commission Act 2015, which received Royal Assent on 26 March. The main provisions of the Act come into effect once the four backbench “Commons Commissioners” are appointed by the House in the new Parliament. Standing Order changes to provide for whole House election of the Commons Commissioners were not proposed prior to dissolution.
188	Changes to the membership of the House of Commons Commission will require legislation to amend the 1978 Act. If the House agrees to our recommendations, legislation should be passed in the current Parliament allowing the new structure to take effect from the start of the new Parliament.	
143	We support the idea of portfolio responsibilities for the elected members of the Commission	This will be a matter for the new Commission to decide.
145	We recommend that the Finance and Services Committee be renamed the Finance Committee to distinguish its responsibilities from those of the Administration Committee. We recommend that the Administration Committee membership be no more than 11 Members. We recommend that the Chairs of both the new Finance Committee and the Administration Committee be drawn from the elected backbench members of the Commission.	Changes to Standing Orders to amend the title of the Finance and Services Committee and reduce the membership of the Administration Committee were agreed on 10 March.
190	We recommend that the standing order changes in respect of the Finance and Administration Committees be passed in this Parliament to be implemented from the start of the new Parliament.	

PARA	RECOMMENDATION	PROGRESS
156	Our proposal is to replace the Management Board with an Executive Committee, which would act as a sub-committee of the Commission. Its core membership would be the official members of the Commission together with the Director of Finance. Up to three other officials could be added by the Commission. The official members would be the Director General of the House of Commons and the Clerk of the House. The Director General would chair the Executive Committee.	The Executive Committee will be established in an interim form by the new Commission after the general election. Its final composition will be confirmed following the senior management review.
157	The Director General of the House of Commons would be a new post. S/he would be responsible for the delivery of the resources needed to support the House in its work, including its parliamentary and outward facing functions. The Clerk would retain responsibility for the quality of support for parliamentary functions, and for development of the skills, experience and expertise to maintain the professionalism of the parliamentary service.	Recruitment of the Director General started in February, following the process proposed by the Committee. It will be completed after the general election by a panel appointed by the new Commission.
171	We recommend that within six months of the appointment of the Director General of the House of Commons, the Executive Committee submits proposals to the Commission to restructure the senior management of the House which should include reductions in the number of senior posts both in DCCS and elsewhere.	The review of senior management will commence once the Director General of the House of Commons is in post.
175	The Executive Committee must be an effective decision-making body. It must also be at the head of a structure of delegations: delegations both of authority and responsibility to key members of staff, who can then be accountable for their exercise of those delegated powers.	The Head of Internal Audit is reviewing the format of delegations from the Accounting Officer to senior staff to assess whether they are in the most appropriate format. Revised delegations will then be issued.
176	Delegations should be published so that Members, staff and others can see who is responsible for what. They should be accompanied by clear timetables for delivery. And in order to demonstrate that the responsibility is accompanied by authority, the overall system of delegations should be reviewed and approved annually by the Executive Committee.	Separately, consideration is being given to how better information about who is responsible for specific services can be provided to Members.
189	Following the establishment of a new Commission as early as possible in the new Parliament, the delegations granted by the Commission to the Speaker (for appointments) and to the Management Board (to carry out their work) should be reviewed and re-issued.	Commission delegations will be a matter for the new Commission.

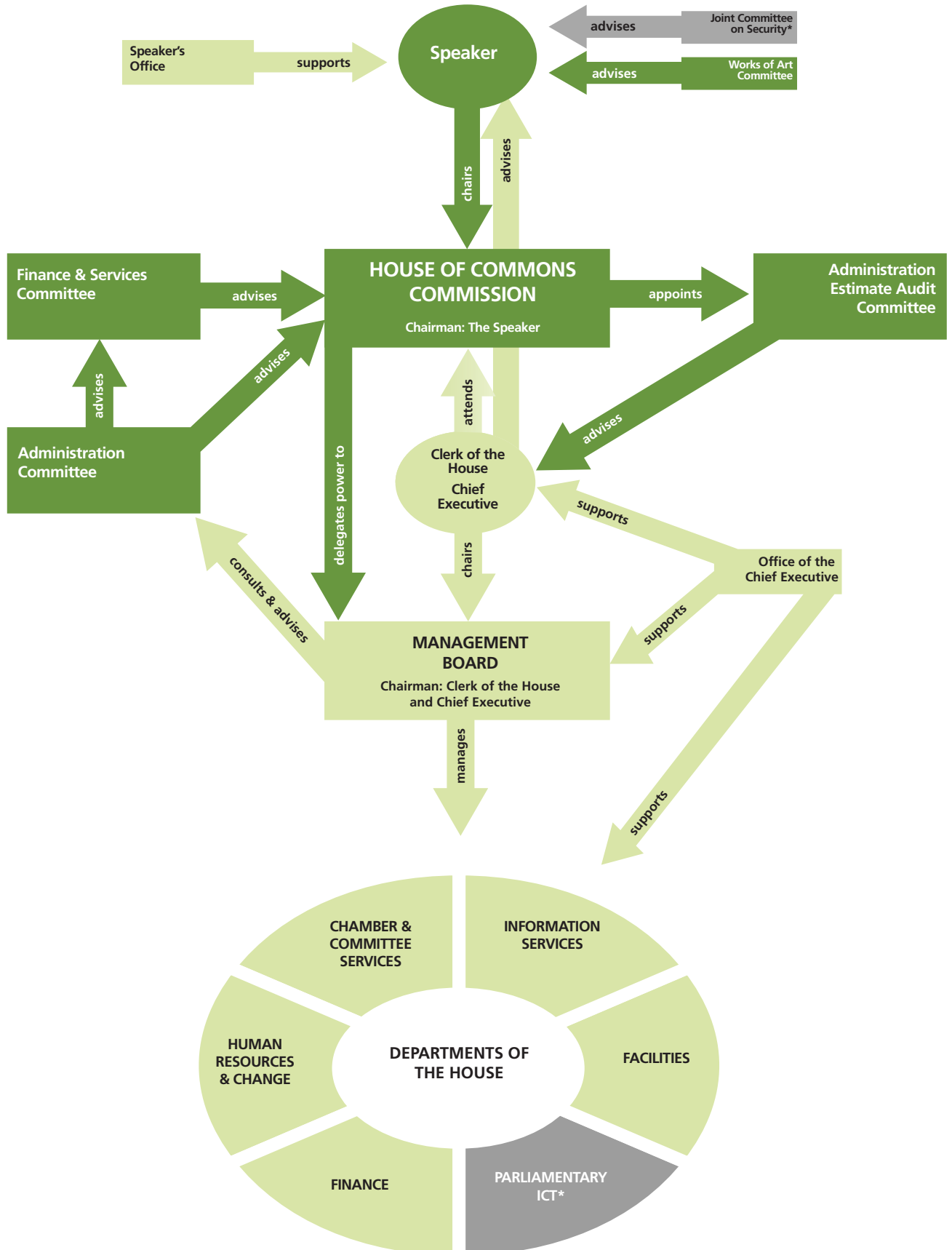
PARA	RECOMMENDATION	PROGRESS
179	<p>We recommend that the Commission and the Executive Committee make a joint commitment to the development of all staff and the active promotion of diversity throughout the House service. In particular we recommend that the opportunities for external secondments, to government departments and to the wider public sector including local authorities, but also to the private and third sectors, should be substantially increased. It should be a strong expectation that members of staff seeking promotion to the Senior Commons Service (SCS) should have been encouraged to have undertaken at least one such secondment and that SCS staff should undertake at least one secondment every ten years.</p>	<p>This will be a matter for the new Commission.</p>
205	<p>Once appointed the Clerk of the House should take forward immediately and lead our recommendations for staff development given his or her clear responsibilities in the new role description.</p>	<p>This responsibility is now included within the Clerk's job description.</p>
186	<p>Our recommendations relating to the Clerk of the House should be implemented without delay so that a permanent appointment can be made in time for the start of the new Parliament. We therefore recommend that the 'paused' recruitment process be formally terminated. We believe that this action should be taken immediately. Whether or not the House endorses our proposals, it is clear that a new recruitment process is needed.</p>	<p>The 'paused' recruitment process was terminated in January 2015. A new recruitment process – agreed by the Commission and in line with the Committee's recommendations – was then started. David Natzler was appointed Clerk of the House on 23 March 2015.</p>
191	<p>The House's endorsement of our report should be the trigger for the new process for the appointment of the Clerk of the House. It should be conducted with a view of drawing on best practice for public appointments, leading to selection on merit by a fair, open and transparent process. The full process, including the Job Description, Person Specification, advertisement for the vacancy and membership of the Appointment Panel, should be agreed by the full Commission.</p>	

PARA	RECOMMENDATION	PROGRESS
187	<p>The transition to the new arrangements we propose will not be immediate. The Executive Committee cannot be formed until the Director General of the House of Commons is in place, and the new Commission will not be formed until after the General Election in May 2015. During this transition period we recommend that:</p> <p>a) The Commission continues in its current form until the end of this Parliament but that the two non-executive external members to the Management Board attend by invitation with immediate effect;</p> <p>b) The Management Board continues in its current form until the Executive Committee can be formed;</p> <p>c) Once appointed the Clerk of the House should become the Head of the House Service but should no longer combine that title with that of Chief Executive;</p> <p>d) The Commission and Management Board must work together to take forward issues that cannot wait for the new structure to be in place which will include: commissioning and supporting the implementation team, General Election issues, staff development, financial planning and performance monitoring.</p>	<p>The two existing members of the Management Board have attended the Commission's meetings since 19 January. The Management Board has continued to meet in its existing form, and will do so until the new Commission is formed. The new Clerk of the House has been appointed as Head of the House Service, but not Chief Executive. The latter term is being removed from descriptions of the House Administration.</p>
203	<p>We recommend that the Commission publish regular implementation updates on its website and by means of written statements to the House and ensure progress is tracked in the annual report for 2014/15 with a programme closure report in 2015/16.</p>	<p>The Commission issued four written statements between January and March 2015. This table fulfils the recommendation to track progress in the 2014/15 Commission Annual Report.</p>

ANNEX 3

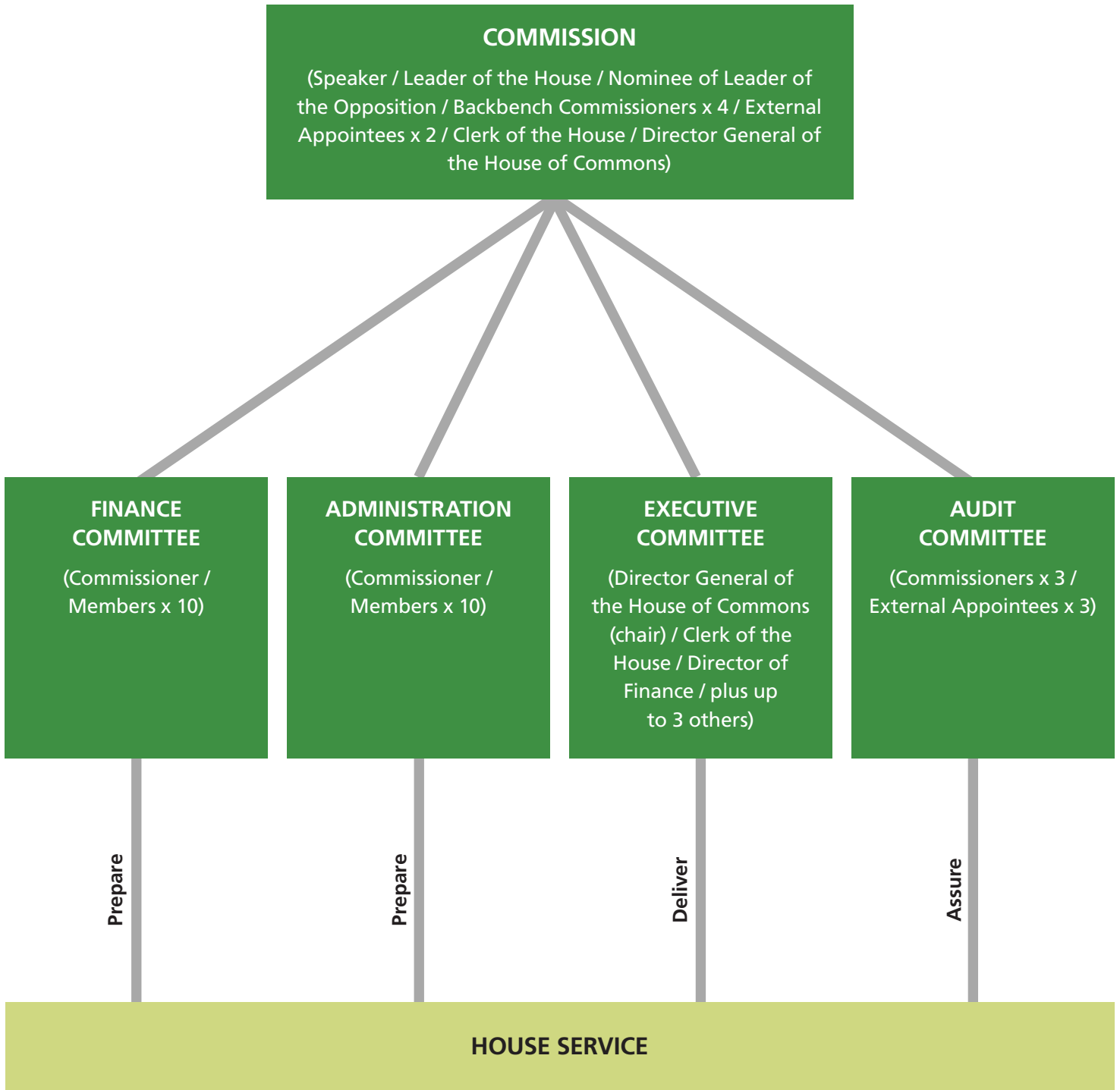
The Governance Structure of the House of Commons Administration 2014/15

(a new structure will apply in 2015/16)



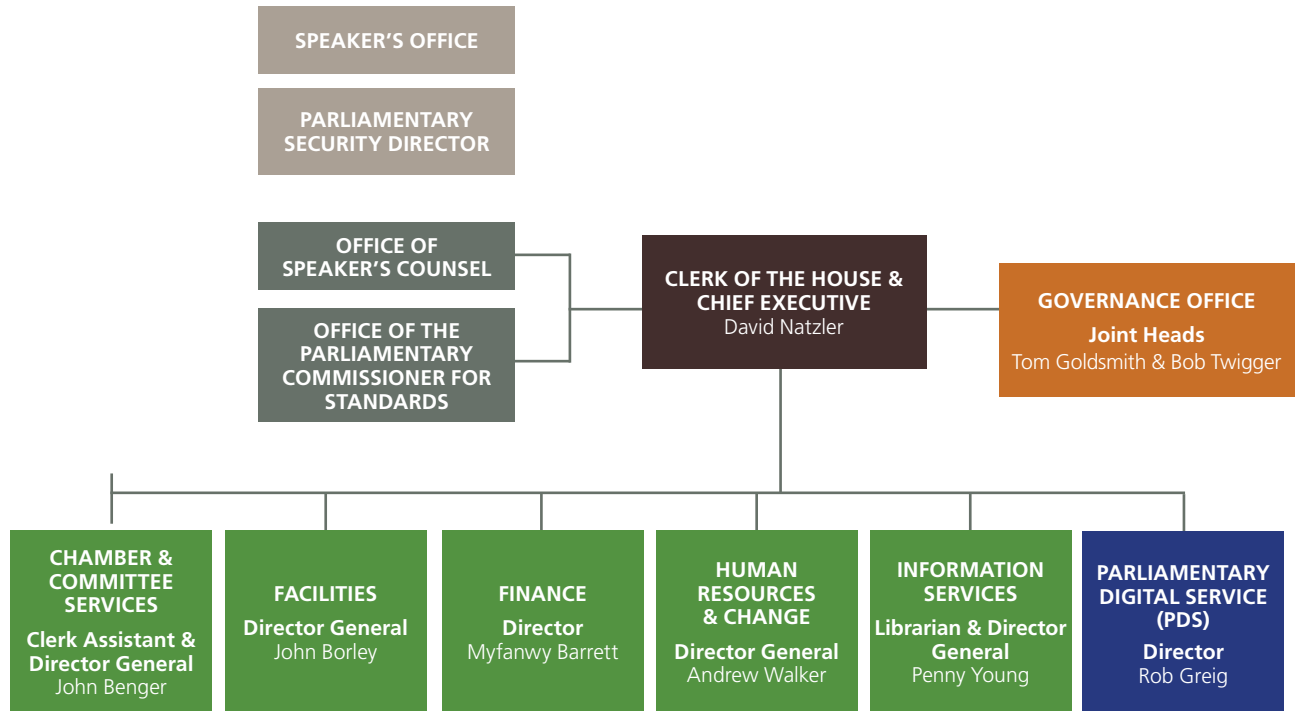
*Joint Services with the House of Lords

New House of Commons Governance Structure

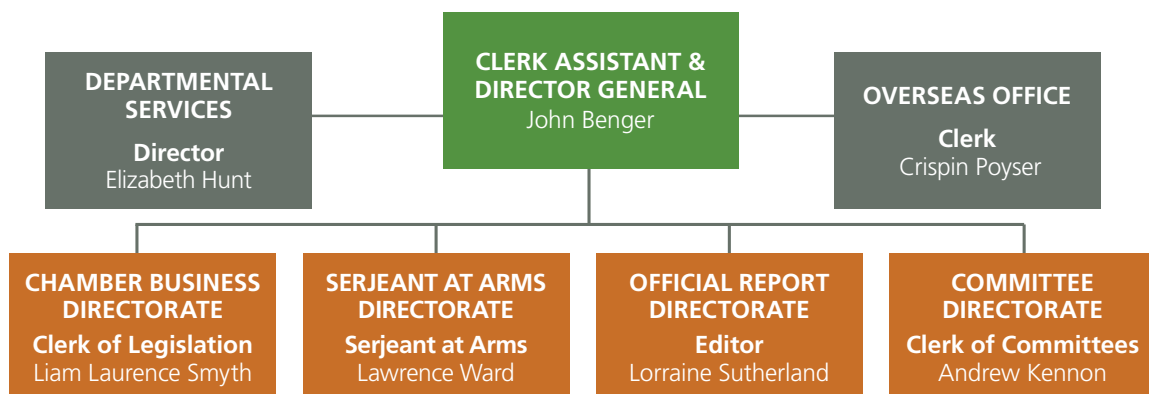


ANNEX 4 Organograms – July 2015

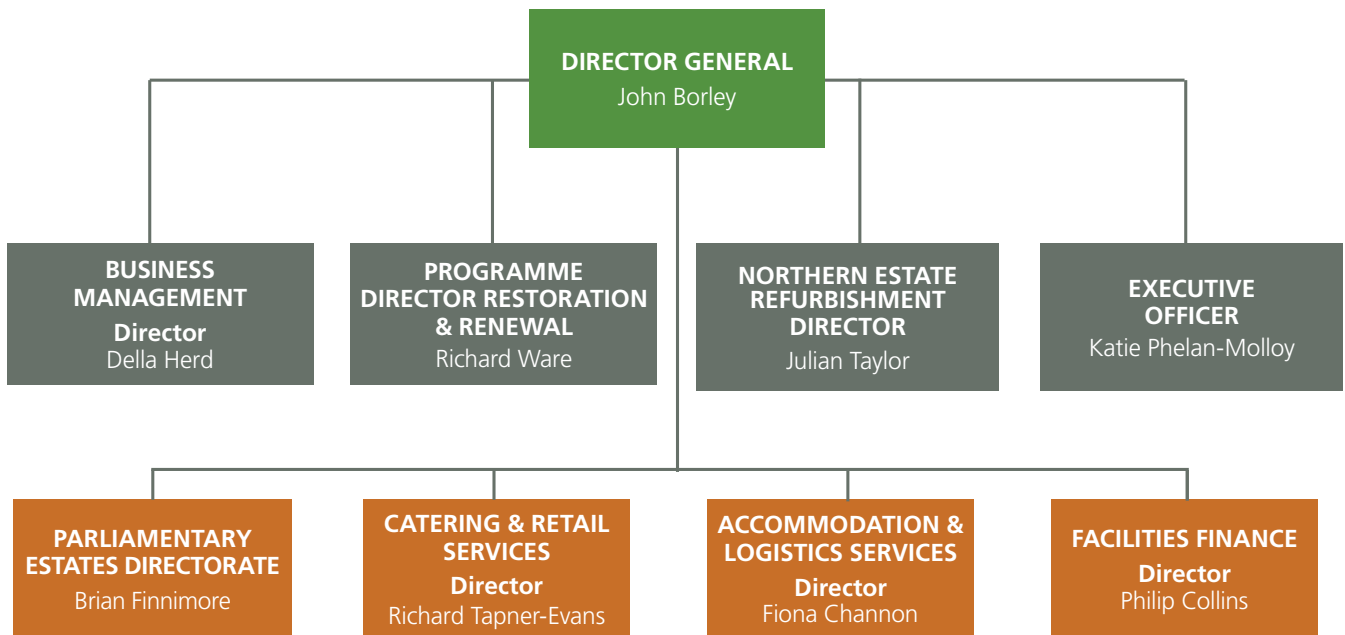
The House Service



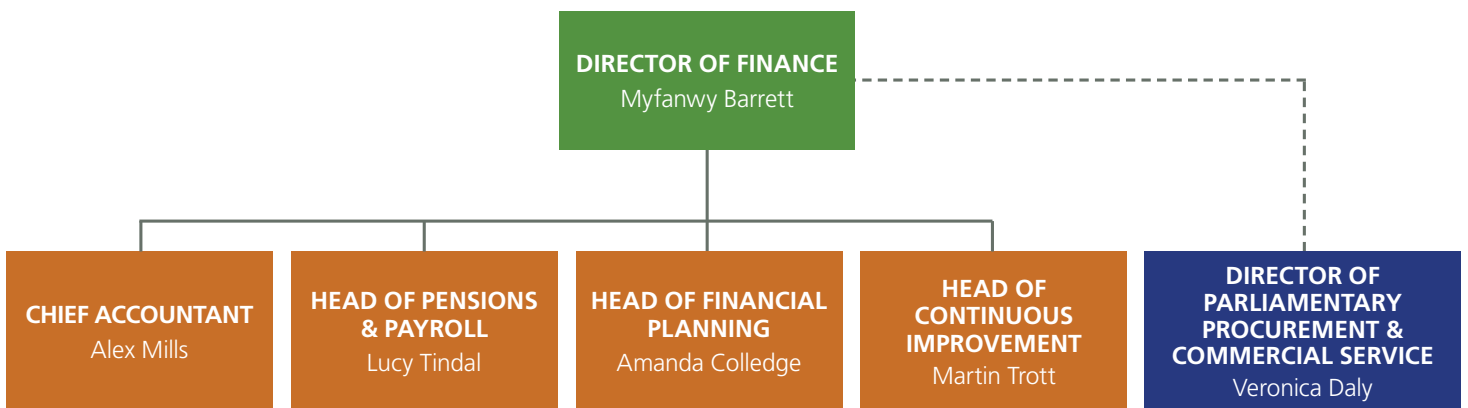
Chamber & Committee Services



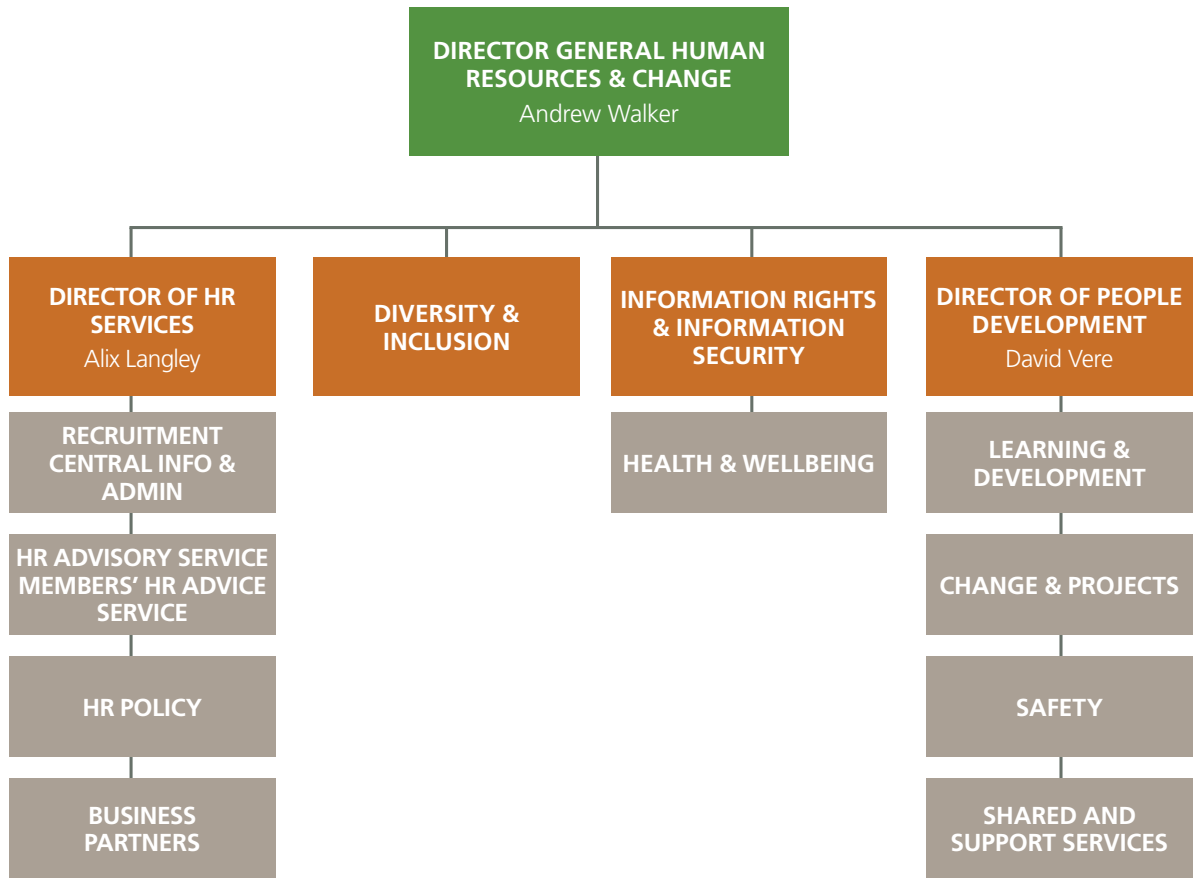
Facilities



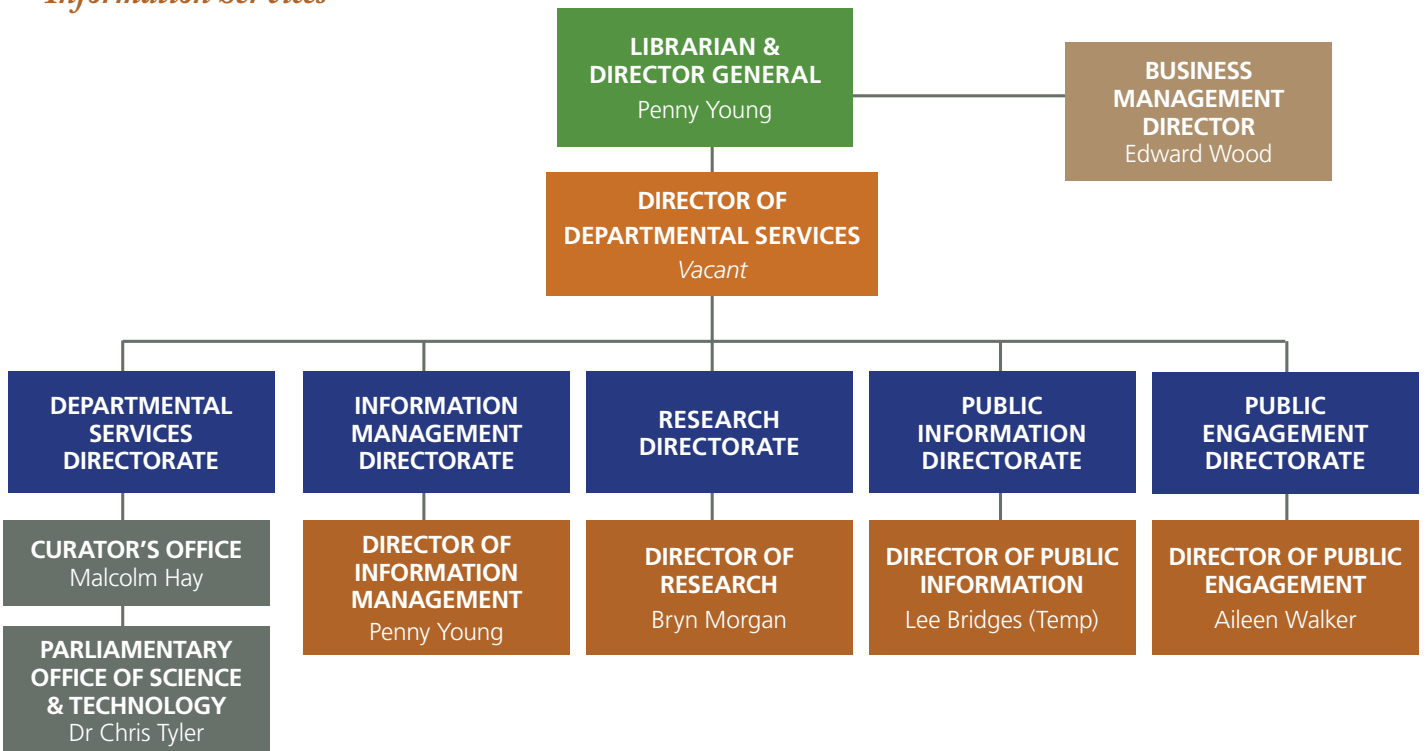
Finance



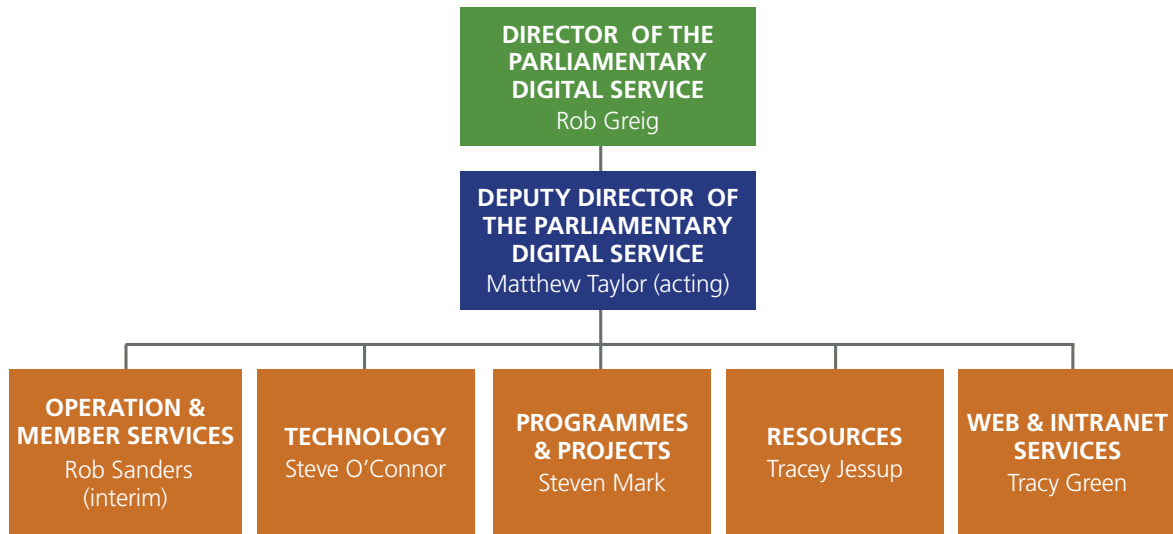
Human Resources & Change



Information Services



Parliamentary Digital Service



ANNEX 5: Sustainability Report

This sustainability report follows – as far as possible and to the extent it is appropriate – the template and guidance issued to Government departments in HM Treasury's *Financial Reporting Manual*. All the data (including expenditure) relate to Parliament as a whole.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS		2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Non-Financial Indicators (tCO ₂ e)	Total Gross Emissions for Scopes 1 & 2.	18,970	20,042	19,182	19,454
	Total Net Emissions for Scopes 1 & 2. (i.e. less green tariffs)	6,755	7,637	7,311	4,502
	Gross emissions Scope 3 business travel	1,154	1,271	1,353	1,264
Related Energy Consumption (million KWh)	Electricity: Non-Renewable	3.90	4.10	5.38	0.0
	Electricity: Renewable	24.86	25.26	23.82	28.55
	Gas	26.40	30.16	25.76	24.33
Financial Indicators (£'000s)	Expenditure on Energy	4,353	5,222	4,256	4,263
	Expenditure on accredited offsets (e.g. GCOF)	0	0	0	0
	Expenditure on official business travel	4,568	4,797	N/A*	2,558*

GLOSSARY

The following scopes of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions are defined in HM Treasury's *Financial Reporting Manual*:

- Scope 1: Direct emissions of greenhouse gases;
- Scope 2: Energy indirect emissions;
- Scope 3: Emissions as a result of official business travel.

tCO₂e: tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent

KWh: kilowatt hours

GCOF: Government Carbon Offsetting Facility

PERFORMANCE COMMENTARY (INCLUDING TARGETS)

Parliament's total gross carbon emissions for 2014/15 reflect the 2015 changes to the conversion factors provided by the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for reporting purposes.

Parliament's long-term target for absolute carbon dioxide emissions resulting from energy use is to reduce emissions by 34% by March 2021 relative to 2008/09 baseline levels. In order to meet this target Parliament's 2014/15 emissions should have fallen by 17.8% on baseline. In 2014/15 Parliament achieved a 16.5% reduction relative to its adjusted 2008/09 baseline year.

Carbon saving at Parliament has focused throughout 2014/15 on the contribution individuals can make through our Environmental Engagement Programme. Carbon savings continued to be identified through technical improvements, with all projects required to identify environmental impacts.

All electrical supplies to the Parliamentary estate are from climate change levy exempt sources.

* Information on business travel costs for 2013/14 is not available following a change in provider. The figure for 2014/15 covers the period 01/09/2014 to 31/05/2015

CONTROLLABLE IMPACTS COMMENTARY

The main source of Parliament's carbon dioxide emissions is energy consumption across the estate. Parliament's environmental improvement plan setting out the actions planned to improve energy efficiency continues to be updated annually.

OVERVIEW OF INFLUENCED IMPACTS

Achieving a reduction in Parliament's emissions continues to be targeted as a priority, but where appropriate Parliament use procurement specifications to encourage reductions in our supply chain.

WASTE

			2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Non Financial Indicators (tonnes)	Total waste		1,639	1,544	1,484	1,929
	Hazardous waste	Total	2	2	2	2
	Non hazardous waste	Landfill	0	0	0	0
		Reused/ Recycled/ Recovered	868	896	874	1,205
		Incinerated/ energy from waste	770	647	608	699
Financial Indicators (£'000s)	Total disposal cost		586	561	466	440
	Hazardous waste – Total disposal cost**		N/A**	N/A**	N/A**	N/A**
	Non hazardous waste – Total disposal cost**	Landfill	0	0	0	0
		Reused/ Recycled	N/A**	N/A**	N/A**	N/A**
		Incinerated/ energy from waste	N/A**	N/A**	N/A**	N/A**

PERFORMANCE COMMENTARY (INCLUDING TARGETS)**CONTROLLABLE IMPACTS COMMENTARY**

Parliament's long-term target for waste generated is to reduce the weight of waste by 30% by 2020/21 relative to 2008/09 baseline levels. Parliament's long-term target for recycling remains to recycle 75% of waste generated by weight by 2020/21. In 2014/15 Parliament achieved a 4% reduction relative to its 2008/09 baseline.

Parliament's target for our recycling and recovery rate for 2014/15 was 66.0%. Parliament improved its recycling and recovery rate to 62.5% in 2014/15, and although Parliament is missing this short-term target, the rate of increase in its recycling rate was on trajectory to meet the long term target. The improvement Parliament has made was achieved through the continued expansion of the schemes to compost catering waste, and the mixed, dry office waste collection system.

Parliament's general office waste is disposed of via energy-from-waste facility. None of Parliament's general waste goes to landfill.

** Parliament's waste contract does not break down costs by waste stream, but is an aggregation of standing charges, costs per collection and per tonne. There is no breakdown of annual costs of hazardous and non-hazardous wastes.

OVERVIEW OF INFLUENCED IMPACTS

Parliament continues to target a reduction in our own generation of waste and recycling rates as a priority, but where appropriate Parliament use procurement specifications to encourage its supply chain to improve performance in these areas.

FINITE RESOURCE CONSUMPTION – Water

			2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Non-Financial Indicators (m ³)	Water Consumption	Supplied	118,215	114,226	122,533	145,200
		Abstracted	104,306	93,313	98,691	88,641
Financial Indicators (£'000s)	Water Supply Costs		248	253	276	383

PERFORMANCE COMMENTARY (INCLUDING TARGETS)

Parliament's long-term target for water use is to reduce the volume it consumes by 50% by March 2021 relative to 2008/09 baseline levels.

In order to meet this target Parliament's 201/15 water use should have fallen by 31% on baseline. In 2014/15 Parliament achieved a 28.8% reduction relative to its 2008/09 baseline year.

Overall consumption rose this year, mainly due to a leak from an incoming water main, which was resolved.

CONTROLLABLE IMPACTS COMMENTARY

The main water consumers on the Parliamentary estate are borehole water for cooling in Portcullis House, and domestic and catering services for mains water supplies.

OVERVIEW OF INFLUENCED IMPACTS

Parliament continues to target a reduction in its own water use as a priority, but where appropriate Parliament use procurement specifications to encourage its supply chain to improve water efficiency.

Administration Estimate Audit Committee Annual Report 2014/15

Introduction

1. This is the fifteenth annual report of the House of Commons Administration Estimate Audit Committee (AEAC), which was established by the House of Commons Commission on 15 May 2000.
2. This report outlines the AEAC's conclusions in relation to the Administration Estimate for the financial year 2014/15. The Committee's findings are set out by reference to the key areas on which it is required to provide assurance to the Accounting Officer under its terms of reference.
3. Details of the AEAC's terms of reference, membership and activity during the year are provided in the Appendix to this report.

Conclusion for the financial year 2014/15

The effectiveness of the system of governance, risk management and internal control (the "system of internal control")

Main Conclusion

4. The financial year 2014/15 has been a year of change. Following the retirement of the Clerk of the House in August 2014, interim governance arrangements were introduced. The Clerk Assistant was appointed Corporate Officer and interim Accounting Officer. The independent Chair of the Audit Committee was appointed interim Chair of the Management Board but continued in her role as independent Chair of the Audit Committee, advising the interim Accounting Officer. Meanwhile on 10 September 2014 a select committee, the House of Commons Governance Committee, was appointed in order to consider the governance of the House of Commons including the future allocation of the responsibilities exercised by the Clerk of the House and Chief Executive. On 22 January 2015, the House agreed a motion supporting the recommendations in the select committee's Report. These recommendations are in the course of implementation. On 23 March 2015 David Natzler was appointed Clerk of the House and the recruitment process for the appointment of the newly created role of Director General of the House of Commons was commenced. Throughout these developments the House Service has continued to provide its core service, operating in "business as usual" mode. Since the implementation of the changes in governance arrangements is ongoing, these will require continued monitoring in order to ensure that, for example, accountabilities and delegations in relation to decision making are clear.

5. There have been some encouraging developments during the financial year. Following improvements in financial management, the National Audit Office has for the first time felt able to place some reliance on the House's financial controls. Also there were examples of well managed contracts and generally a better level of implementation of agreed audit actions.
6. However, there are a number of areas which require attention in the short term. These include cyber and information security, safety management, procurement and contract management, information systems, certain aspects of human resources management and, generally, the effective use of the system of risk management. In the longer term, the changes in governance and the forthcoming Restoration and Renewal Programme will require the House of Commons Service to ensure that it has or has access to the right expertise and skills at all levels of management, in order to deliver challenging programmes and organisational change, while providing value for money in the context of tight budget setting.
7. In all of these areas, appropriate organisational culture is essential. Following observations of attitudes to speedy compliance, we are pleased that, in the next financial year, this topic will be addressed in greater detail. Apart from issues such as security and safety, a culture which encourages learning from other organisations (not necessarily in the public sector) and an aspirational, forward-looking approach which is open to new ways of working (such as more joint working with the House of Lords, as encouraged by the Committee on House of Commons Governance) will lend support to a more robust system of internal control.
8. We note the Director Internal Audit's overall opinion on the House's framework of governance, risk management and control for 2014/15 which remains as a "moderate" level of assurance, a view with which we concur, given the number and nature of findings which have arisen from his work. We are disappointed that we are reporting for the fourth time that the pace of improvement is insufficiently rapid for management to achieve the objectives which they have set themselves. This greatly concerns us.

Supporting evidence

9. Although financial management continues to improve, there remain areas in which we have felt it necessary to take particular interest. Concerns about Capital forecasting led to a Review of the forecasting process last year. This has resulted in significant progress with project leaders being more directly involved in forecasting and

assessment of the levels of scrutiny to which budgets are subject. However, we consider that there is still room for further improvement.

10. The Parliamentary Procurement and Commercial Service was formed last year and has been setting up its policies and processes during the current financial year. In the meantime, known areas of non-compliance with EU procurement regulations and the House's own rules were kept under review and particular contracts were identified as non-compliant. Although efforts are being made to deal with the contract management issues arising as a consequence, we shall continue to monitor these.

11. A number of areas relating to House security and safety have formed part of our deliberations during the year. Together with the Lords Audit Committee, we have continued to scrutinise the terms of the Special Service Agreement with the Metropolitan Police Service, including its extension, and the Security Arrangements Renewal Programme, which will result in the transfer of security officers in house. The latter will require skilful human resources management in the next financial year. Safety management on the Parliamentary Estate has also been considered by the Audit Committees of both Houses, following a series of incidents. A subsequent review highlighted the need for a change of culture towards safety management and the need for significant and sustained corrective action in the future. Finally, an analysis of Cyber security against a framework of standard good practice and reviews of information management were undertaken. These identified the urgent need for constant vigilance in ensuring that protective measures are kept up to date and that appropriate safeguards are in place in relation to cyber and information security generally.

12. The system of risk management is reviewed annually. This year the review concluded that, while the design of the main system is generally appropriate to the House, the operation of the system is still not operating effectively. The introduction of a Unified Risk Register was a welcome development, although more work was necessary on issues such as the identification of key mitigations and the setting and delivery of SMART action plans, if the focus on reporting, as opposed to the management, of risks is to be avoided in the future.

13. At a time of change, the role of human resources management is even more important. Particular areas of such management have been scrutinised this year. In the previous financial year, we had raised concerns about sickness absence reporting which were due to be considered further during this financial year. However,

following the unsatisfactory upgrade of the main HR and Finance system (HAIS), the production and reporting of data on sickness absence has ceased, while weaknesses in the HAIS system are addressed. This is an area of risk which will require our continuing attention. We also enquired into the processes for making special payments, such as negotiated compensation payments, and the extent to which the approval processes used were sufficiently transparent as they involve the use of public funds. We expect to consider this issue further in the next financial year, as the new governance arrangements are put in place. Finally, there remain a number of actions in relation to more formal programme management (for example as part of the People Strategy) and in relation to the production of reliable data and information (for example in respect of Pension Administration and the completion of performance management assessments) which require completion.

14. A number of specific aspects of projects and programmes were followed up during the year in order to ensure that lessons are learned for the future.

The integrity of the annual Accounts

15. We have reviewed the annual Accounts.

16. We consider the Accounts acceptable for signature by the Accounting Officer. We are satisfied with the Annual Governance Statement and the process undertaken to produce it.

The work of the internal audit service

17. We note that Internal Audit (IA) largely completed its audit plan during the period, meeting its target. We note that the relationship between IA and Deloitte continues to work well, with Deloitte, in general, providing specialist knowledge in specific areas rather than taking on entire audits.

18. We also welcome the continued close cooperation by Internal Audit with its colleagues in the House of Lords.

19. Overall we are satisfied that the scope and nature of the work of Internal Audit, supported by its partnership with Deloitte, and in parallel with the work of the NAO as the external auditors, adequately underpins the assessment of the Accounting Officer of the system of internal control.

The external audit by the external auditor

20. We have reviewed the findings set out in the NAO's Audit Completion Report and noted that the outcome of

the audit is the recommendation of an unqualified audit opinion. The recommendations contained within the audit completion report do not highlight any substantive weakness in financial or internal control.

21 We have noted the contents of the letter of representation, which was standard except for the reference to confirming the estimate of the figures arising from the transfer of the House of Commons Staff Pension Fund to the Cabinet Office. The disclosures, including those relating to fraud and regularity, are consistent with our knowledge of the estimate. We have further noted the inclusion of an additional disclosure relating to the transfer of the House of Commons Pension Scheme liability out of the Administration Estimate during 2014/15.

22 From our review of the work of the NAO during the year, and the findings reported, we are satisfied that the work of the NAO has been sufficient to provide material assurance that the financial statements meet the financial reporting requirements, and this work supports the Committee's recommendations concerning their approval.

Other matters as were referred to the Committee by either the Accounting Officer or the Commission

23 No additional matters were referred to the Committee by the Accounting Officer or the Commission in 2014/15.

Appendix – Terms of reference

1. The Committee has the following terms of reference, which are approved by the House of Commons Commission (the last changes were agreed in July 2012):

REMIT

The Administration Estimate Audit Committee pursues its objectives and fulfils its responsibilities on behalf of the Commission and, as it deems appropriate, shall draw any matters arising within these terms of reference to the attention of the Commission.

MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the Committee shall be:

- 3 MP members, including:
 - A Member of the House of Commons Commission
 - A Member of the Finance & Services Committee
- 3 External Members, appointed by the Commission

The Chairman shall be appointed by the Commission from amongst the external members of the Committee.

OBJECTIVES

The Audit Committee has been established to support the Accounting Officer in discharging his responsibilities under the Administration Estimate, particularly with regard to the maintenance of an effective system of internal control. The Committee's objective is to give assurance to the Accounting Officer on:

- The effectiveness of the system of governance, risk management and internal control (referred to collectively as the "system of internal control")
- The integrity of the annual Resource Accounts
- The work of the internal audit service
- The external audit by the external auditor

Other matters as may be referred to it by either the Accounting Officer or the Commission

RESPONSIBILITIES

Governance, Risk Management and Internal Control

The Committee is responsible for monitoring governance, risk management and internal control ("the system of internal control"). This monitoring will include:

- The effectiveness of the design and operation of the system of internal control
- The development and operation of the system of risk management, in accordance with the overall risk management policy
- The level and range of assurances on the management of risks
- The adequacy and implementation of proposed management actions to improve the effectiveness of internal controls

Annual Resource Accounts

The Committee is responsible for reviewing the annual Resource Accounts before their submission to the Accounting Officer. This review to include:

- any significant changes in the accounting policies or treatments
- major financial reporting judgements or estimates
- consistency of the Annual Governance Statement
- resolution of any matters raised by the external auditor
- significant adjustments resulting from the audit by the external auditor

Internal Audit

The Committee is responsible for monitoring the work of the internal audit service. This includes:

- Involvement in the appointment of the Director of

Internal Audit and the audit partner

- Agreement to the annual internal audit plan and monitoring of progress
- Consideration of the results and findings from internal audit work and the adequacy of management responses
- Consideration of the Director of Internal Audit's annual report and opinion

External Audit

The Committee is responsible for monitoring and reviewing the work of the external audit. This review to include:

- Recommendations on the appointment and scope of work of the external auditor
- Consideration of the external audit strategy
- The results of the external audit work, including any reports to those charged with responsibilities for governance, and the adequacy of management responses
- Representations made by management to the external auditor
- Annual review of the external auditor's independence and effectiveness

Membership

1. The Committee is chaired by an external member, Dame Janet Gaymer DBE, who is also an external member of the House of Commons Management Board. Barbara Scott and Stephen Brooker are the other two external members of the Committee. Dame Janet replaced Alex Jablonowski as the Chair of the Committee in September 2013.
2. The current MP members of the Committee are: Ms Angela Eagle MP, Rt Hon Sir Alan Haselhurst MP, and John Thurso MP.
3. The membership of the Members Estimate Audit Committee also reflects these changes.
4. The Clerk of the House, the Director of Finance and the Director of Internal Audit also attend the Committee's meetings. All three officials may withdraw for specific items at the Committee's, or their own, request.
5. The Committee's Secretary is the Private Secretary to the Clerk of the House. The Committee is also supported by a Committee Assistant.

Meetings

2. The Committee is chaired by an external member, Dame Janet Gaymer DBE, who is also an external member of the House of Commons Management Board. Barbara Scott and Stephen Brooker are the other two external members of the Committee. During 2014/15 the MP members of the Committee were: Ms Angela Eagle MP, Rt Hon Sir Alan Haselhurst MP and Rt Hon John Thurso MP. Membership of the AEAC is the same as that of the MEAC.
3. The Clerk of the House, the Director of Finance, the Director of Internal Audit and officials from the National Audit Office also attend the Committee's meetings. These officials may withdraw for specific items at the Committee's, or their own, request.
4. The Committee's Secretary is the Private Secretary to the Clerk of the House. The Committee is also supported by a Committee Assistant.

Meetings

5. The Committee met formally six times in the financial year 2014/15: on 19 June, 2 and 16 July, and 15 October 2014 and 28 January and 4 March 2015. Attendance is shown in the table below.

<i>Member</i>	<i>Total number of meetings attended</i>
Dame Janet Gaymer DBE (Chair)	6/6
Stephen Brooker	6/6
Angela Eagle MP	1/6
Rt Hon Sir Alan Haselhurst MP	6/6
Rt Hon John Thurso MP	5/6
Barbara Scott	5/6

6. In addition it held an informal meeting to review its effectiveness on 20 November 2014.
7. The external members of the Committee held informal meetings with the House's finance team and the NAO to discuss the draft House of Commons Administration Estimate accounts on 18 June 2015.

Internal Audit

8. The Committee routinely receives an oral report at its meetings from the Director of the Internal Audit (IA), together with a paper showing progress against the annual work programme, summaries of the main conclusions from completed audit assignments and the balance between core audit and the other work undertaken by IA.

9. There was one change of staff in IA during 2014/15 with the introduction of an Internal Audit Fast Stream Placement to replace the former Trainee Auditor post, when the latter post-holder moved into a line management position.

10. One member of staff completed his professional studies with the Chartered Institute of Internal Auditors. All qualified staff maintained their continuing professional development in the year. The Internal Audit team carried out a self-assessment against their professional standards and discussed their action plan with the Committee at the March meeting.

11. During 2014/15 Deloitte were reappointed to the role of IA's external support, following the retendering of the IA support contract, which expired in September 2014. Deloitte assisted in 10 audits during the year, as well as supporting the team with access to resources and information and some support to the in-house team during the part-time secondment of the Director to assist the House of Commons Governance committee. Due to the specialist skills required, Deloitte supported audits on such areas as safety management and financial control environments, as well as the ICT specific audits.

Internal audits considered by the Committee

12. During 2014/15 the Committee was notified of 37 audits relating to the Administration Estimate, including 10 audits from the 2013/14 work programme. 10 further audits from the 2014/15 work programme will be considered at the July 2015 meeting. Audit reports are usually considered first by the external members of the Committee, who may choose to bring matters to the attention of the full Committee.

13. Audits discussed by the Committee dealt with a wide range of topics, covering:

- a. Core audit issues such as financial management, procurement and contract management,
- b. Corporate issues, such as risk management, sickness absence reporting, cyber security and safety management
- c. Services provided by the House Service.

The Committee also followed-up implementation of agreed management actions.

14. IA also undertakes follow up reviews when an audit has been issued for six months and contains major findings and agreed actions. The Committee received a number of follow-up audits including regular progress updates from tracking by Internal Audit.

15. Further information on specific audits is included in the minutes of the Committee's meetings which are available on the Committee's website.

Risk Management

16. The Committee continued to fulfil its responsibility to monitor the development and operation of the system of risk management, in accordance with the overall risk management policy, and the level and range of assurances on the management of risks.

17. In October 2014 it met with the Corporate Risk Management Team to discuss the House Service's system of risk management. The Committee also discussed the performance and risks managed by the Committee Office and the Committee Office Risk register.

Internal audit charter

18. The Internal Audit service works to the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards professional framework. The House's internal audit charter, sets out the purpose, role, responsibility, status and authority of internal auditing within the House of Commons and outlining the scope of internal audit work.

Planning of the audit programme

19. The Committee agreed the Internal Audit programme for 2014/15 in March 2014. The Committee agreed proposed changes to the programme in January 2015.

External Auditors

20. The National Audit Office (NAO) has continued to provide an external audit function for the House of Commons. NAO staff routinely attend meetings of the Committee and receive all of its papers and minutes, although the Committee continues from time to time to discuss certain items of business without auditors present.

21. In October 2014 the Committee discussed the NAO's planned approach to auditing the House of Commons Accounts 2014/15. The NAO raised the following significant risks: the interim governance arrangements put in place in September 2014, the House's significant capital investment in the Parliamentary Estate and major business developments such as the transfer of the House of Commons Staff Pension Scheme liability to the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme and the renegotiation of the security contract with the Metropolitan Police Service.

22. The external members of the Committee met with the NAO and Finance staff on 18 June 2015 to discuss the draft House of Commons: Administration Estimate accounts for 2014/15. Following this the accounts were discussed by the full Committee on 07 July 2015 prior to being signed off by the Clerk of the House, as Accounting Officer.

House of Lords Audit Committee

23. The Committee held joint meetings with the House of Lords Audit Committee in July 2014 and January 2015. The main items considered were the Parliamentary Digital Service, the Parliamentary Procurement and Commercial Service, the Security Arrangements Renewal Programme and Safety on the Parliamentary Estate. The Committee also continues to share agendas and minutes with the House of Lords Audit Committee.

Members Estimate Audit Committee

24. A Members Estimate Audit Committee was established by the House's Members Estimate Committee on 14 June 2004. It has the same membership as the Administration Estimate Audit Committee and meets at the same time as the AEAC – each agenda item sets out whether the Committee is considering it in its capacity as the Administration Estimate Audit Committee, the Members Estimate Audit Committee or both. The annual report of the Members Estimate Audit Committee will be published with the House of Commons: Members Estimate Accounts 2014/15.

Further information about the Committee

25. The AEAC publishes annual reports and certain papers (agendas, minutes and actions arising) on its page on the parliamentary website <http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/other-committees/administration-estimate-audit/>.

