

APPOINTMENT OF A MODERNISATION SELECT COMMITTEE: FINANCIAL CONSEQUENCES

Memorandum by the Accounting Officer

1. The House will today consider a motion to make a new Standing Order to establish a Modernisation Select Committee for the duration of the current Parliament.

2. The motion reads as follows:

That—

(1) There shall be a Select Committee, to be called the Modernisation Committee, to consider reforms to House of Commons procedures, standards, and working practices; and to make recommendations thereon;

(2) The Committee shall consist of not more than 14 Members, of which 4 will be the quorum of the Committee;

(3) Members shall be nominated to the Committee by a motion in the name of the Leader of the House;

(4) Unless the House otherwise orders, each Member nominated to the Committee shall continue to be a member of it for the remainder of the Parliament;

(5) The Committee shall have power to send for persons, papers and records; to sit notwithstanding any adjournment of the House; to adjourn from place to place; to report from time to time; and to appoint specialist advisers either to supply information which is not readily available or to elucidate matters of complexity within the Committee's order of reference;

(6) That this Order be a Standing Order of the House until the end of the present Parliament.

3. Standing Order No. 22C requires me, as Accounting Officer, to produce a memorandum on the financial consequences of any motion to be considered by the House if the motion would have a direct consequence of additional expenditure under the House of Commons: Administration Estimate estimated to be £50,000 or more.

4. On the assumption that the Committee will be as active as a typical select committee related to a Government department, it would require a staff of about five, costing around £400,000 a year. Initially it is envisaged that staff would be provided by transferring staff from existing select committees and other offices in the House with the aim of replacing them by concurrent recruitment if possible. I have not included the costs of media support, on the assumption that these costs will be met from existing media teams within either House.

5. On the same assumption, costs of travel, specialist advisers, publications etc. would amount to about £46,000 a year. This calculation is based on the average spend of select committees excluding the four travelling committees.

6. The total extra annual recurring cost of establishing the Committee would therefore be of the order of £446,000 a year for the duration of the current Parliament. Any net additional costs in 2024-25 will be met from the House of Commons central contingency. Ongoing costs thereafter will have to be factored into baseline budgets from 2025-2026 onwards.