House of Commons Governance Committee

House of Commons Governance

Report

Session 2014–15

Report, together with formal minutes relating to the report

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The House of Commons Governance Committee

The House of Commons Governance Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to consider the governance of the House of Commons including the future allocation of the responsibilities for House services currently exercised by the Clerk of the House and Chief Executive.

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In this report we set out a package of proposals which address the immediate problem of the appointment of a new Clerk of the House and include necessary reforms to the governance of the House. They will deliver:

- A coherent management and strategic leadership structure in which the Member and official elements are properly integrated for the first time;
- Clarity to the respective roles of Members and officials.

Taken together our proposals provide an organisational framework which will enable the House to operate more effectively and efficiently and provide reinforcement to the development of a unified House service.

Our proposals are:

- 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 (Speaker (Chair), Leader of the House, Shadow Leader of the House);
  - Four backbench members elected by the whole House and drawn one each from the three largest parties and the remaining Members;
  - Two external members;
  - 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 a Finance Committee. The Administration Committee should have no more than 11 members;
- 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.

Structural changes are not enough to reform how an organisation operates: we have made important recommendations about changes to the culture of the House and its service which will be necessary to deliver the reforms we look for.

We were asked to report by 12 January, but to ensure that the House had as much time as possible to consider and act on our report before dissolution at the end of March, we set ourselves the tighter timetable of reporting by Christmas. We have set out a timetable for implementation which we believe is realistic and practicable, but will require support from across the House.

The ‘paused’ recruitment process for Clerk of the House/Chief Executive should be formally terminated.

We propose new recruitment processes for the Clerk of the House and the Director General of the House of Commons which are in line with modern recruitment practice.
1 Introduction

Background

1. On 1 September 2014 the Speaker made a statement to the House announcing that he had ‘paused’ the process to appoint a Clerk of the House and Chief Executive to succeed Sir Robert Rogers. On 10 September 2014 the House agreed to the motion to appoint a committee 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.’\(^1\) The motion included the appointment of the Chair of the committee; the remaining members were added on 16 October 2014.\(^2\)

2. We discuss what lessons might be learnt from the ‘paused’ recruitment exercise later in this report (paragraph 63), but note at this point that the fact that the House service has been operating under temporary arrangements at the most senior levels has placed a premium on us reaching speedy and agreed conclusions. The resolution of 10 September 2014 required that we report by 12 January 2015. To ensure that the House has as much time as possible before dissolution at the end of March 2015 to consider our Report and make decisions on it, we set ourselves an even tighter timetable of publishing before the Christmas adjournment. We are glad that we have met this deadline. In this Report we have set out a package of proposals for reform of the principal governance structures of the House and the most senior official positions which we believe will significantly increase the House’s capacity to respond effectively and efficiently to the challenges of the future. We have not attempted to drill down into the structures below the Management Board level, but we have described an implementation procedure which should follow through on our high level changes.

Approach to the inquiry

3. On 17 October 2014 the Chair published the following statement about how we intended to approach our task:

   We intend as far as possible to be transparent and open in our proceedings. We will take evidence in public and publish the transcripts on this website. We will publish submissions made to us in writing except where they have been submitted in confidence. We understand that some individuals and groups will prefer to talk to us in private.

   We are inviting anyone with an interest in this matter to send us their views … If you want your submission to be in confidence, please tell us. …

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\(^1\) HC Deb, 10 September 2014, col 1014
\(^2\) HC Deb, 16 October 2014, col 554
We have to answer the specific question of how the responsibilities of the Clerk and Chief Executive should be allocated in future, but we are also interested in

–The role of the House of Commons Commission and its relations with other committees of Members of Parliament and the House’s Management Board;

–How to combine effective decision-making with transparent accountability

–How to ensure that governance in the House of Commons matches best practice in the rest of the public sector

–How to develop the skills the House needs from its most senior staff

–What preparations the House needs to make now to be ready for the challenges of the future, particularly restoration and renewal of the Palace of Westminster

This is a demanding agenda to tackle in the time available to us. It is likely that at some point we will have to narrow our field of inquiry to focus on what seem to us to be the key issues, but we want to do so on the basis of the best possible understanding of the broader context within which those issues sit.3

4. In the course of our inquiry we have received 91 submissions, including 36 from staff of the House and 22 from Members. We have held 13 evidence sessions hearing from 59 individuals, of whom 16 were staff of the House and PICT and 21 were Members. We had meetings with the Speaker, the three Deputy Speakers, the Lord Speaker, and Paul Martin, Parliamentary Security Director. We spent a very interesting afternoon listening to, and discussing, the views of more than 60 members of House and PICT staff (in eight groups). We are very grateful to all those who have assisted us. We are particularly grateful to the Speaker, the Deputy Speakers and the Lord Speaker for agreeing that we could attribute to them a number of the statements they made and opinions they expressed in our private meetings with them.

5. We have also received detailed submissions from each of the devolved legislatures and seven Parliaments in Europe and the Commonwealth. We would like to express our thanks and appreciation to the Speakers, Presiding Officers, Secretaries General and Clerks who have taken time out of their very busy schedules to assist us.

3 House of Commons Governance Committee, ‘Chair’s introductory statement,’ accessed 15 December 2014
6. A full list of witnesses and of the submissions we have published⁴ is at end of this report. All that material is available on our website: www.parliament.uk/governance-committee. We are also very grateful for the wise advice and counsel of our Specialist Adviser, Nicholas Kroll, and to Committee staff, who worked to a tight schedule.

⁴ We offered House of Commons and PICT staff the opportunity to have their evidence published without their names if they wished. We also received some written evidence which we did not publish at all, at the request of the people who submitted it.
2  What is good governance?

7. All organisations need some form of governance, and there are many different models by which it may be provided. Corporate governance is defined by the Treasury as:

the way in which organisations are directed, controlled and led. It defines relationships and the distribution of rights and responsibilities among those who work with and in the organisation, determines the rules and procedures through which the organisation’s objectives are set, and provides the means of attaining those objectives and monitoring performance. Importantly, it defines where accountability lies throughout the organisation.5

8. Rt Hon John Thurso MP, Chair of the Finance and Services Committee, who ran hotels and companies at CEO level before he entered the House in 2001 and has also served as a non-executive director, stated in written evidence: ‘The main points of good governance are common to all organisations’. They are: ‘a clear understanding of roles and how checks and balances work’ and ‘external (or non-executive) balance’. He added: ‘The division of responsibilities between executives and non-executives and the role and powers of the Chair are critical’; and stated: ‘Structures should be based on first principles.’6 Lord Browne of Madingley, who is currently the Government’s ‘Lead Non-Executive’, told us:

Governance must start with clarity, which is difficult to achieve, and with a clear understanding of accountability, which includes decision rights. Who gets to decide what and to whom do you report when you have done it?7

Sir David Higgins told us: ‘clarity of accountability is essential in any sensible organisation.’8

9. Governance arrangements, then, must enable an organisation to meet its primary purposes: they must always be a means to an end, and not an end in themselves. They must deliver clear decision-making, with a high degree of transparency and clarity, whilst incorporating appropriate levels of oversight, challenge and effective personal accountability. They must be practicable and resilient under pressure, taking account of how people behave. They must also have the support and confidence of those who operate within them. Good governance distinguishes between strategic and operational decision-making, and has mechanisms in place to ensure that those decisions are then delivered and the objectives met. Central to all governance arrangements is a focus on the achievement of the main objectives of the organisation.

5  HM Treasury, Corporate governance in central government departments: Code of good practice 2011, July 2011
6  John Thurso MP (GOV011) para 3
7  Q1 [Lord Browne]
8  Q579
10. In principle, any reform of governance arrangements should be incremental rather than sudden or disruptive, so that organisational memory is not lost and what works well is retained.\(^9\) On the other hand, as Dame Janet Gaymer, one of the external members of the Management Board, reminded us, ‘it is very important to look at the governance structure as a whole’\(^10\), and there is a danger in addressing a part of the arrangements without thinking through the consequences for the whole.

11. Furthermore, while some principles of good governance are universal, governance structures will differ according to the needs of the body in question. John Thurso commented in written evidence:

> it is…crucial to understand that there is not a complete read across between private and public sector, or between profit and not for profit organisations, and that the different focus of an organisation needs to be reflected in the governance structures. This is particularly true of the House of Commons.\(^11\)

12. There is much to be learned from best practice elsewhere in the public and private sector, but we are aware of what Sir Kevin Tebbit told us:

> I would beware of simply trying to import management models from business and trying to install them here, because of the self-governing nature of the House.\(^12\)

This point is crucial and has informed all our deliberations. The House of Commons is a unique institution, because it is the national legislature. This singular character of the House is compounded by the fact of the United Kingdom’s ‘unwritten constitution’, which means that Parliament’s sovereignty, including how it is run, is constrained only by its own legislation which it may reverse.

13. There is another characteristic of the House of Commons which makes parallels with other organisations hazardous: the Commons is run by its 650 Members, who have all been through the hard test of election and who are skilled at articulating concerns and making an argument. This places it in a different position not only from PLCs in the private sector, but from every other public institution. At the same time, no one within Parliament, including no one who gave evidence to us, suggests that Parliament should not be as efficient as possible, nor that it should not learn from the experiences of other institutions.

**Structures**

14. Rt Hon Lord Laming suggested:

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9 For Sir Kevin Tebbit’s approach to this issue see Qq794-96
10 Q100
11 John Thurso MP (GOV011) para 3
12 Q805 [Sir Kevin Tebbit]
The important thing from my point of view is not so much the structure—I am sure that either can be made to work—but the role definition and accountability...you can do it either way, but you must ensure that the accountability is well and truly defined and that there is no ambiguity and no shifting the buck here, there and everywhere.13

Conventionally a clear governance structure would have at its apex a single governing body, containing both executive and non-executive roles, with a remit which defines what it is responsible for, and what it has delegated and to whom. This delegation of powers and responsibilities (essentially of ‘decision rights’) can be to formal sub-committees of that board, or to named individuals in executive positions. There is normally a single senior executive—a single head—who then delegates specific responsibilities further down the organisation. In identifying that role, an organisation should look to its ‘real purpose’. Witnesses confirmed this in their evidence.14

15. Properly constructed boards encourage collective decision-making and provide a valuable series of checks and balances on the executive function. However, it is also important that they balance this oversight with delegating their decision rights to where they are most effectively held.

16. Whilst much of the focus of good governance practice in recent years has been on the development of boards, personal accountability remains a fundamental principle in public institutions. In turn, those who are accountable must have the ability to manage that for which they are accountable, and therefore a single line of command, at executive level, is critically important. Andrew McDonald told us: ‘the basic notion underlying the accounting officer is that one has clarity about who ultimately is responsible for the proper discharge of public money.’15 He also made clear that a perfect solution was seldom achievable:

Elegance and precision in job design and organisational design is something that one should aim at, but it is rarely obtainable in practice. In absolute terms, one might be able to sort out 90% of the responsibilities going to one role or another.16

Mark Addison, the former Chief Executive of the Crown Prosecution Service, described in written evidence an alternative governance structure, which was introduced at the Crown Prosecution Service following a major review in 1998:

13 Q488 [Lord Laming]. See also Gavin Wright, Forbes Solicitors (GOV083), Leader and Shadow Leader of the House of Lords (GOV093)
14 Q16, Q356
15 QS86
16 QS82
A key recommendation was to create two separate roles at the head of the organisation (and to replicate this at local, operational level). One, the Director of Public Prosecutions, was to focus on casework and legal policy, and the other, the Chief Executive, was to focus on managing the organisation.17

Sir David Higgins told us about the close working relationship he had with Paul Deighton, then Chief Executive of the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games:

We said, “We have to make the relationship work; we have to trust each other and we can’t let anyone divide the relationship. We will have an entirely open and honest relationship. It is not a case of who is on top of each other or who reports to whom.” The reality was that neither of us reported to each other, but it was pretty clear that in the end we both had to work together and solve our own disputes.18

People

17. Effective governance relies on the quality of people, from the top to the bottom of the organisation: the right people with the right skills in the right places. This applies to board members and senior managers as much as anyone else. It is essential that the right skills and experience are represented in the senior governing bodies. The Cass Business School suggested that: ‘boards which are diverse, experienced with the issues they are governing, and independent tend to provide oversight.’19

18. In creating an organisation of effective people a balance needs to be struck between developing internally and recruiting externally, providing staff with stability and career progression but also bringing from outside the skills and expertise that are needed to fill gaps. This must be supported by, and can also contribute to, a wider commitment to the encouragement and promotion of diversity.

Culture

19. Barbara Scott, one of the external members of the Management Board, told us: ‘Culture, at the end of the day, is how we do things and how we behave, and it has to come from the leadership.’20 The Public Administration Select Committee (PASC) in its written evidence told us:

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17 Mark Addison (GOV 047)
18 Q578
19 Cass Business School (GOV071) para 8
20 Q147 [Barbara Scott]
Any structural or organisational change should only be considered as a consequence of a full understanding of the underlying causes of difficulty or failure. If this is not done, structural change, with all the disruption which that involves, will become no more than distraction. This may be welcomed by those who want to avoid the more difficult, personal causes of problems in the organisation, which are likely to be in the culture. By culture, we mean what is embedded in the attitudes and behaviour of the people in the organisation, and PASC has found this is by far the most important determinant of organisational effectiveness.21

20. A culture which encourages and promotes constructive challenge, both within a management team and by bringing in external expertise and experience, is now generally accepted to be a critical element in effective decision-making. This culture then needs to permeate down through an organisation so that all its members understand the value of oversight and are ready to explain their actions, decisions and outcomes.

21. An effective organisation should embrace the diversity of the society of which it is part. Only by doing so can it draw on the full spectrum of strengths and skills available to it. In the case of a public sector organisation there is an additional imperative to reflect the diversity of those whom it is there to serve and from whom its resources are drawn.

22. Effective organisations have a clear focus on the delivery of objectives, outcomes and outputs, rather than inputs. This needs to be tied in with clarity of responsibility and accountability. Myfanwy Barrett, Director of Finance, explained: ‘it is more about a culture in the organisation that follows up on a decision and accepts that that is a decision and it is going to happen.’22

23. Openness and transparency are common features of effective organisations, creating an atmosphere which encourages innovation and promotes the benefits of change. Staff need to feel empowered to take initiatives in areas for which they have delegated responsibility, confident that they will be supported by their managers. Responsibility and accountability should not tip over into blame and recrimination.
3 How does the House match up?

24. The House’s primary purpose is its constitutional one as the central institution of our democracy. It is a representative assembly whose core functions include legislation, authorising taxation, debate, and holding the government to account. Those functions are fulfilled by its Members, who act on behalf of their constituents. And those constituents have a constitutional right of access to their representatives. With that right of access go other obligations, not just to explain and inform but also to engage and promote. In an age where the electorate to whom we are answerable are increasingly questioning what we do and how we do it, not only access to the Palace of Westminster, but also our educational and outreach activities are more and more important, and central to maintaining the legitimacy of the institution.

25. Thus, as an organisation, the House’s real purpose includes both its traditional core functions as a representative assembly and its institutional obligations to the electorate. The Deputy Speakers told us that it was important to consider the House’s primary purpose and to focus on how Members can be enabled to do their jobs, although there was also a duty to operate efficiently. The primary purpose of the House service must be to support Members in the effective discharge of their parliamentary responsibilities.

26. The governance arrangements for the House have developed over time often in response to particular issues or events. This has resulted in a situation where the complexities which are inherent in the character of the House as a legislature have been compounded by layers of interventions which have built on and adapted what went before rather than rationalising or restructuring it.

27. In essence, the position of the House in respect of its administration is not that different from its position in respect of its proceedings and privileges. It is sovereign. But where it has legislated explicitly, those statutes have force and cannot be overruled by resolution or other methods of internal decision-making. Under the House of Commons Administration Act 1978 (the 1978 Act), the House of Commons Commission, not the House, is the employer of the House’s staff (with a few specific exceptions). The Commission is also responsible for determining the Estimate, and thus the House’s financial resources.

23 See Michael Fabricant MP (GOV002), Sir Peter Luff (GOV005), and Robert Flello MP (GOV054)
Evolution of House of Commons Governance

The two Houses of the UK Parliament occupy what has always been, and remains, a Royal Palace. In 1965 they were formally granted permanent use of the Palace with the Speaker acting on behalf of the Commons in respect of the Commons areas. Maintenance of the Palace and responsibility for the rest of the parliamentary estate remained in the hands of the Government until 1992.

The basis for the current administration of the House was shaped in the 1970s. The Compton Inquiry in 1974 was followed by the Bottomley Committee in 1975 which recommended changes to the administration of the House that are reflected in the House of Commons Administration Act 1978. This set up the House of Commons Commission in its current form (replacing various historic provisions including the House of Commons Offices Act 1812). The 1978 Act meant that for the first time the House was formally responsible for its staffing and expenditure. At the same time a Board of Management was set up which has now evolved into the Management Board.

Since 1978 there have been three separate management reviews of the House:

- Ibbs (1990) led to recommendations about financial management in the House and the transfer of the estate to the House (making the Clerk responsible under the 1992 Parliamentary Corporate Bodies Act);
- Braithwaite (1999) recommended the Finance and Services Committee develop a closer relationship with the Commission, created the Audit Committee, proposed that the Clerk should be supported on corporate issues by a small office (the Office of the Clerk) and that both the Commission and Management Board should become more strategic;
- Tebbit (2007) recommended the Management Board become a more strategic body with revised membership including non-executives and supported by an upgraded Office of the Clerk called the Office of the Chief Executive. It also proposed further shared services including Estates and Works (with the Lords as a partner rather than customer of the Commons).

28. In 1965 The Queen agreed to transfer responsibility for management of the Palace of Westminster (which was and remains a Royal Palace) to the two Houses, with separate arrangements for Westminster Hall and the royal rooms in the House of Lords. In the House of Commons the responsibility was vested in the Speaker on behalf of the House. The Speaker thus became, in practice and in common law, the ‘householder’ for the

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24 HC Deb, 26 April 1965, cols 328-33
Commons parts of the Palace. By contrast, the Parliamentary Corporate Bodies Act 1992 makes the Clerk of the House the legal owner of the House’s property and gives him or her authority to enter into contracts on its behalf.

29. The House itself can make decisions about its own administration through the usual procedures of debate and decision, as, for example, when agreeing to the savings programme or to arrangements for the filming of a documentary. In practice, through the combination of the statutory powers given to it and the impracticality of using proceedings on the floor of the House for regular decision making on administrative matters, the Commission has acquired over time many of the strategic responsibilities and powers which a governing board might be expected to have. But they have not been codified or explicitly endorsed by the House. There is no published list of them and it remains the case that actions proposed or decisions taken by the Commission, other than in pursuit of its statutory powers, could be challenged, amended or reversed on the floor of the House.

30. People do not become Members of Parliament because they want to run the House of Commons, a point endorsed by Nigel Mills MP. The services provided by the House, at every level and of every category, whether advice on parliamentary privilege or on procedure in the Chamber, or information and policy analysis, or security and access control, or accommodation, or catering, are there to facilitate the work of Members in serving their constituents. It is generally only when those services go wrong, and they interfere in or obstruct that work, that questions about how the services are provided, and who makes decisions about them, become of interest to Members.

### Changing work of the House

Throughout the last 50 years the size of membership of the House has remained relatively constant, but the scale of the work undertaken by Members, and the numbers and work of staff in the House Service, has changed immensely. These changes include the establishment of Departmental Select Committees in 1979, a huge increase in constituency related-work for Members (the number of Members’ staff has more than doubled since 1990; new Members in 2010 have reported spending around 60 per cent of their time on constituency issues), far fewer Members combining their role with significant jobs outside, greater public engagement by the House plus greater exposure to the work of Members through televised coverage, 24-hour media and engagement with social media. The House has responded to these changes; for example, in 1979 the House had around 550 employees; it now has over 1,700 (which includes the transfer of maintenance and catering staff during the period, but excludes the growth in Members’ staff).

25 Votes and Proceedings, 3 April 2014
26 Q303 [Nigel Mills MP]
27 Q303 [Sir Menzies Campbell MP]
The role of the Speaker

31. The Speaker is elected by the House to preside over its proceedings and to be its representative both formally (for example on state occasions) and informally (for example through his or her involvement in public engagement activities: an area of much-increased activity in recent years). But as the statutory chair of the House of Commons Commission and as ‘householder’ for the Commons areas of the Palace, s/he also has important administrative responsibilities.

32. The extent of the Speaker’s non-procedural responsibilities is not well understood. There is no published list of them. Sometimes the Speaker may be asked to act because there seems to be no one else who appropriately could do so. S/he has a range of statutory responsibilities either on behalf of the House (eg in the Parliament Act 1911 or the Freedom of Information Act 2000)28 or to discharge functions which have a parliamentary dimension but must be the responsibility of someone above the political fray (eg as chair of the four permanent Boundary Commissions29 or of the Speaker’s Committee on the Electoral Commission).30 S/he has thus a position of leadership within the House, without being fully in charge. Indeed it would not be appropriate that s/he should be. As the Leader of the House, Rt Hon William Hague MP, told us:

It is only possible for it to proceed on a collective basis, which is as it should be in a Parliament: there should not be any one figure in charge in the same way there is a Secretary of State who has to be in charge and is accountable to Parliament for being in charge of his or her Department. It is different from a Government Department in that respect.31

33. From the start of the 2010 Parliament, the House has elected the Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Ways and Means and the two other Deputy Speakers. Previously they were, in effect, chosen by the Whips. As with select committee chairs, this welcome reform has increased their authority and status in the eyes of the House. Like the Speaker, they have been chosen by the House to preside over its proceedings.

34. With one exception, the Deputy Speakers have no role in deputising for the Speaker in her/his administrative roles. The one exception is that the 1978 Act provides that the Deputy Speaker ‘may exercise the functions of Mr Speaker’ as chair of the House of Commons Commission in the latter’s temporary absence.32 To the best of our knowledge this provision has never been used.33 The only formal involvement which any of the

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28 For further information see Liam Laurence Smyth, House of Commons staff (GOV001)
29 Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986
30 Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000
31 Q242
32 House of Commons (Administration) Act 1978, Schedule 2
33 When the then Speaker was absent in 2008, the chair was taken by other members of the Commission
Deputy Speakers has in the administrative side of the House is that the Chairman of Ways and Means is a member of the Finance and Services Committee and is Chair of the Panel of Chairs with general responsibility for the work of general committees.

35. The physical distance between the Speaker and his deputies (whose offices are on the opposite side of the building) seems emblematic of a functional distance. In our view, the Speaker and Deputy Speakers should always operate as a team. The Speaker and Deputy Speakers should consider reviewing whether the Deputy Speakers should be available to support the Speaker in his responsibilities outside as well as inside the Chamber. We consider this further in paragraph 138.

**House of Commons Commission**

36. The Commission is established under the House of Commons (Administration) Act 1978 (the 1978 Act). The Commission is a body corporate. Under paragraph 6(2) of Schedule 1, the Commission may determine its own procedures. It presently consists of the Speaker (ex officio), the Leader of the House (ex officio), a nominee of the Leader of the Opposition, and three other Members appointed by the House who are not Ministers of the Crown. Past service on the Commission is not a bar to nomination or appointment as a member of the Commission. Under the statute, the Speaker is the Chairman of the Commission. Upon a dissolution of Parliament, the Speaker continues in office as a member of the Commission until a Speaker is chosen in the new Parliament.

37. The functions of the Commission set out in the 1978 Act are:

   a) To prepare and present to the House for printing a report on the exercise of its functions in each financial year. The report must mention any delegation of the Commission’s functions or change in existing delegations.
   
   b) To appoint the staff in House departments; this excludes the Clerk of the House, any Clerk Assistant, the Serjeant at Arms and the Speaker’s personal staff.
   
   c) To keep the terms and conditions of staff of House Departments, including pay and grading, broadly in line with those of the Home Civil Service. The pensions of staff are to be kept in line with or provided under the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme.
   
   d) To prepare and lay before the House an Estimate for expenses of the House Departments or expenses otherwise incurred for the service of the House (the Administration Estimate).
   
   e) To appoint the Accounting Officer for the Estimate.
   
   f) To allocate functions to House Departments and Offices and to increase or decrease their number.34

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34 Summary of sections 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the *House of Commons (Administration) Act 1978*
The current Commission are supported by a number of Committees (set up by standing order) and Boards. These are set out with their membership below:

- **House of Commons Commission**: Rt Hon John Bercow MP (The Speaker), the Leader of the House, Rt Hon William Hague MP, the Shadow Leader of the House, Angela Eagle MP, Frank Doran MP, Sir Paul Beresford MP, Rt Hon John Thurso MP.

- **Management Board**: David Natzler (Acting Clerk of the House), John Borley (Director-General of Facilities), Andrew Walker (Director-General of HR and Change), Myfanwy Barratt (Director of Finance), Dame Janet Gaymer (external non-executive) and Barbara Scott (external non-executive). The Director-General of Chamber and Committee Services/Clerk Assistant, the Director-General of Information Services/Librarian and the Director of PICT are also members of the Management Board but these posts are currently filled on an acting basis. The Board is currently chaired by Dame Janet Gaymer.

- **Finance and Services Committee** (responsible for scrutinising and monitoring the expenditure of the House and advising the Committee on the annual estimate): Rt Hon John Thurso MP (Chair), Sir Paul Beresford MP, Clive Betts MP, Geoffrey Clifton-Brown MP, Robert Flello MP, Rt Hon Sir Alan Haselhurst MP, Rt Hon George Howarth MP, Rt Hon Lindsay Hoyle MP (the Chairman of Ways and Means), Rt Hon Sir Greg Knight MP, Robert Syms MP, Iain Wright MP.

- **Administration Committee** (considers the services of the House, advising the Commission): Rt Hon Sir Alan Haselhurst MP (Chair), Conor Burns MP, Thomas Docherty MP, David Evennett MP, Michael Fabricant MP, Tom Harris MP, Mark Hunter MP, Marcus Jones MP, Nigel Mills MP, Tessa Munt MP, Robert Syms MP, Mark Tami MP, Rt Hon Keith Vaz MP, Ben Wallace MP, Dave Watts MP, David Wright MP.

- **Audit Committee** (supports the Clerk of the House and Chief Executive by advising him in relation to his responsibilities as Accounting Officer): Dame Janet Gaymer (Chair, external member), Angela Eagle MP, Barbara Scott (external member), Rt Hon John Thurso MP, Rt Hon Sir Alan Haselhurst MP, Stephen Brooker (external member).
38. We support the principle of a statutory body with functions including those currently held by the Commission which is accountable to the House through, for example, parliamentary questions. Such a body provides clarity and certainty at the apex of the governance structure because statutory responsibilities can be amended only by further legislation. In a House where the Executive will almost always have a majority it is a protection against Executive interference.35

39. But we have concluded that as currently constituted the Commission lacks the authority and the capability to provide consistent strategic direction. Its members told us that, faced with specific issues, it could be an effective decision-making body, but that it was less good at taking a longer term view or setting a strategic framework for the House service as a whole. It was not always clear how issues came to it, or what decisions were required of it.36 The Speaker told us that the Commission worked relatively well, but that it could be better at following up on decisions and interacting with the Management Board.

40. We heard evidence that corporate board members are expected to spend at least two days a month and sometimes much more on work for the board (in the public and private sectors). Commission members are very busy people with many calls on their time. We suspect that many of them find it difficult to devote as much time as they would wish to their Commission duties.

41. The Commission is not well understood even within the House. As Angela Eagle MP told us,

It was always rather a mysterious thing before I got on to it. … I have to say the management and structure of the place has always been rather mysterious. You only get to come across bits of it by accident, and if you are lucky enough to stay here long enough, you then stumble across more of it.37

42. Its meetings are always in private. It publishes only the barest of minutes. Rt Hon Hazel Blears MP suggested that unless a Member had had specific direct contact with the Commission, as she had in connection with the Speaker’s Parliamentary Placement Scheme, ‘I will hazard a guess that very few will know who the members are and what the responsibilities are.’38 The Speaker told us that the Commission’s profile might be improved if its backbench members were elected and that the elected members could have portfolio responsibilities. He said that, in his view, there should be ex officio places on the Commission for the Speaker, the Leader of the House, and the Shadow Leader. The Deputy

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35 See also paragraph 143 where we consider a point made by the Shadow Leader of the House about the present Commission.
36 Q260
37 Q258
38 Q309 [Hazel Blears MP]
Speakers said the Commission should be more accountable and that election of its members would be one way of achieving this.

**Finance and Services Committee**

43. The Finance and Services Committee (F&S) has 11 members, formally chosen by the House. In the last two Parliaments, one of the members has been the Chairman of Ways and Means. Its chair is chosen by the committee from among its members, rather than elected by the whole House. The responsibilities of F&S are described in Standing Order No. 144. They are to prepare the Estimates for submission to the Commission; to monitor the financial performance of the House administration and to report to the Commission on the ‘financial and administrative implications of recommendations made to them by other committees of the House.’ In 2010 F&S agreed a remit for itself, to which it then secured the agreement of the House of Commons Commission. The evidence we have received suggests that that remit and the rigour with which the Chair and the committee have stuck to it have played an important part in the constructive contribution which F&S is generally regarded to have made in the current Parliament.

44. We were told that in the past F&S’s responsibility to report to the Commission on recommendations made by other committees had led it to unpick carefully-considered packages of recommendations from, for example, the Administration Committee, but that in the current Parliament its decision to focus more exclusively on its financial management responsibilities together with a constructive relationship between the chairs of the F&S and Administration committees had largely obviated this problem.39

45. Another important factor in F&S’s success has been that its chair is also a member of the Commission.

**Administration Committee**

46. The Administration Committee has 16 members, formally chosen by the House. Its chair is chosen by the committee from among its members, rather than elected by the whole House. The committee’s role is described in Standing Order No 139 as being ‘to consider services provided for and by the House and make recommendations thereon to the House of Commons Commission or to the Speaker.’ It may ‘make rules and give directions to Officers of the House only in respect of such administrative matters as may from time to time be determined by the Speaker or the House of Commons Commission.’ The protocol agreed between the Commission and the committee sets out a range of issues on which the committee is invited to advise the Speaker, the House of Commons Commission, the Management Board and individual Heads of Department as appropriate.
It lists several delegations, described as being of oversight, nomination or authority. It makes no reference to making rules or giving directions to Officers of the House.

47. It is hard to see how the protocol flows from the standing order. There is no mention in the protocol of what responses the Administration Committee may expect to its advice, whether there is, for example, any obligation on those to whom the committee gives its advice to explain, in cases where this advice is not acted on, why it has not been accepted. The protocol is described as an ‘Ambit of Advice from Administration Committee under paragraph (1) of Standing Order No. 139’, which implies that it sets limits on the subjects on which the Commission and others are prepared to receive advice. But the standing order provides no authority for such limits.

48. The Administration Committee does a necessary job, but, through no fault of its own, works sub-optimally. Its membership is too large; attendance as a consequence is unpredictable and variable. Its role is not clearly articulated. Even those Members who understand that its role is advisory, rather than executive, are frustrated by the lack of feedback (from the Commission and from officials) where its advice is not followed, and by delays in the timely implementation of that advice which is accepted.40

49. One element which has worked well is the series of constructive relationships which the Chair of the committee has forged with officials across the House service and PICT.41 But they have required both patience and time on his part. The absence of any link between the committee and the Commission has, in the Chair’s view at least, made it harder.42

Liaison Committee

50. The Liaison Committee’s remit as set out in Standing Order No 145 does not extend to House administration or governance. But as the committee of chairs of select committees it has unsurprisingly interested itself in the support given by the House to its select committees. Its Chair told us that the committee was in this process ‘a consumer rather than a manager.’43 He went on

I think it would be wrong for the Liaison Committee or anybody else to become involved in the HR management of staff. However, as Chairman of the Liaison Committee, I work as closely as I can with the management, the Clerk of Committees, to ensure that the needs of committees are met in a way that allows us to maintain a service, with people receiving appropriate promotion and having their careers developed.44

40 Q302
41 David Weir, House of Commons staff (GOV036), para 6
42 Q66 [Sir Alan Haselhurst MP]
43 Q87 [Sir Alan Beith MP]
44 Q87 [Sir Alan Beith MP]
Management Board

51. The Management Board has nine members, of whom two are external members. The current members of the Management Board are:

- Dame Janet Gaymer, Non-executive external member, and Acting Chair
- Myfanwy Barrett, Director, Finance
- John Benger, Acting Director General, Information Services
- John Borley, Director General, Facilities
- David Natzler, Acting Clerk of the House
- Barbara Scott, Non-executive external member
- Jacqy Sharpe, Acting Director General, Chamber and Committee Services
- Matthew Taylor, Acting Director of PICT
- Andrew Walker, Director General, Human Resources and Change

It is responsible for the management of the services provided for the House of Commons by the Departments of the House; it advises the Corporate Officer on the services that should be provided by PICT, a joint department of the two Houses; and it gives advice on those services to the House of Commons Commission and to F&S. Under an instrument of delegation made by the House of Commons Commission on 22 October 2007 and amended by the Commission on 23 January 2012, the Board is responsible for:

a) Ensuring that the grading, pay and conditions of staff in the House Service are kept broadly in line with those of the Home Civil Service;

b) Appointing staff (other than certain staff appointed by the Speaker), with each executive Board member responsible for the appointment of staff to their own Departments, subject to directions given by the Clerk of the House as Chief Executive;

c) Exercising the Commission functions concerning staff in the House Service, but with the Commission retaining the power to re-organise the Departmental structure of the House;

d) Consulting the trade unions (subject to the right of the trade unions to make representations directly to the Commission in certain circumstances);

e) Managing the services provided by Departments of the House and advising the Commission and F&S on those services;

f) Advising the Corporate Officer of the House of Commons on the services that should be provided by joint departments of the two Houses;

g) Overseeing the budgets of House Departments;

h) Assisting F&S in the production of draft Estimates for expenditure before their submission to the Commission.
52. We have received clear evidence of increased professionalism in the most senior levels of the House service. Of the four permanent executive members of the Board (as opposed to the three acting members), three have lengthy experience outside the House.45 This is an experience mirrored in similar jurisdictions such as Canada.46 The Management Board has worked hard to improve its own effectiveness and in the words of Alex Jablonowski, who was an external member of it between 2008 and 2013,

We came a long way and now, by and large, the board—certainly when I left—was acting in the collegiate way where people put a board hat on and left their individual directorate responsibilities behind. That was very important.47

53. It successfully delivered a 17 per cent real terms reduction in budgeted resource expenditure over the first four years of the current Parliament. The most recent Staff Survey results point to increasing levels of satisfaction in the leadership of the service. John Borley told us that the Board ‘works as well, if not better, than any board of management I have been on.’48

54. On the other hand our own discussions with staff showed wide variations in awareness of and support for the Board. Although Andrew Walker reinforced Alex Jablonowski’s assessment that it is now a substantially more corporate body than it had been in the past, it has not yet persuaded its own staff that it can act corporately to the highest standards as a positive force for change. Its evidence suggested uncertainty over its own strategic role.49 An analysis of its agendas suggests that it lacks focus and spends too much time on issues that could be handled at a lower level.

55. Two examples of where the Board could have handled things differently were repeatedly raised with us: the pay negotiations between 2012 and 2014; and the introduction of standardised time recording for staff across the House service. The latter example was believed by many staff to be conceptually incompatible with the parliamentary timetable and does seem to us to derive from a failure to base policies on a clear understanding that the primary purpose of the House is parliamentary. In both cases there has been a lack of clarity both on the policy objectives and on decision-making responsibilities. Ken Gall, President of the Trade Union Side, told us that it was not clear

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45 Myfanwy Barrett, Director of Finance, was Corporate Director of Finance, Harrow Council, and Head of Finance, Greater London Authority; John Borley, Director General of Facilities, was Chief Executive, Naval Recruiting and Training Agency, Naval Base Commander, HM Naval Base Clyde, and Military Assistant to the Chief of Defence Procurement; Andrew Walker, Director General of Human Resources and Change was Treasury policy adviser, and Assistant Director of HR, Inland Revenue.
46 Marc Bosc, Acting Clerk of the House of Commons, Canada (GOV085)
47 Q120 [Alex Jablonowski]
48 Q509
49 Q183 [David Natzler and Andrew Walker]
who was ‘really accountable for decision making with regard to staff in this organisation.’

It seems extraordinary to us that staff, and in particular the Trades Unions, should not be clear on who is responsible and therefore accountable for so significant a change to the terms and conditions of staff.

56. Although the Clerk chairs the Management Board as Chief Executive Officer and not as the head of a department, the Board still has characteristics of a representative rather than a functional body. Staff from several departments described the experience of preparing papers for the Board which were then presented to it by their Head of Department. David Vere described the House service as being ‘in the holding company stage, where we have a number of relatively independent departments within a corporate whole.’ David Natzler told us that sometimes Board decisions were not implemented and followed up with a specific example. This was not, in his view, about wilful non-acceptance of the Chief Executive’s authority but ‘more a concern that decisions taken by the Board are for a variety of reasons not always implemented across the House consistently and to the timescales envisaged by the Board.’ Tom O’Leary described his experience of organising the Parliament-wide Anniversaries Programme, that high level backing ‘does not necessarily translate into the organisation saying, “Right, we are going to get on with this.”’

57. In our view there are three underlying factors which contribute to this situation:

- A dysfunctional relationship between the Board and the Commission;
- Lack of a clear focus on implementation or delivery, with inconsistent follow-up of agreed decisions and actions;
- Inadequate clarity on delegations to and within individual departments.

The Clerk of the House

58. The position of Clerk of the House is a Crown appointment. S/he is appointed by Letters Patent and could be removed only by an Address to Her Majesty. This method of appointment dates back at least as far as the reign of Edward IV. But it is more than a historical curiosity: it is an important protection of the independence of the post and thus
of the advice which the occupant gives to Members on all sides of the House and to the Speaker.

59. The choice of candidate to be proposed for appointment to the Sovereign was before 2011 made on the basis of informal discussions and soundings. Rt Hon Sir Alan Beith MP recalls the appointment of at least two Clerks of the House in the 1980s being to some extent determined by the House of Commons Commission.58 In 2006 two names were put before the Speaker by the retiring Clerk from which the Speaker then chose.

60. The Tebbit Review had recommended that the appointment process for Clerk of the House/Chief Executive should be ‘by means of competition, open to the (inevitably limited) group of suitably qualified candidates, with a Selection Board similar to those employed for Permanent Secretaries to Government Departments.’59 However, no steps were taken to implement the recommendation. In his 2010 review of the implementation of Tebbit, Alex Jablonowski scored this recommendation as “Not Achieved” and as “Highly Relevant”. Mr Jablonowski told us that in his view the recommendation was not implemented for the 2011 appointment process simply because of a lack of time.60

61. Nonetheless, in 2011, following discussions with the retiring Clerk of the House, the Speaker decided to introduce a competitive process to recruit his successor. Applications were invited from eligible candidates in both Houses of Parliament and in the devolved legislatures. The process was administered by a senior HR professional in the then Department of Resources.

The 2014 recruitment process

62. Sir Robert Rogers announced his retirement in April 2014. The then Leader of the House, Rt Hon Andrew Lansley MP, told us that the Commission decided, at its meeting later that month, that ‘we were looking for the appointment process to be conducted, as far as possible, on the same basis as 2011.’61 In the event, however, there were differences from the previous process. For example, an executive search firm was engaged to identify potential candidates, undertake initial interviews, review all applications and draw up a long list of suitable candidates.

63. Our role has not been to conduct a post mortem of the 2014 process, but there are lessons which should be learnt for any future process. First, as we have already noted, Commission procedures are not always as well understood by its members as they might be. In this instance the evidence from both John Thurso and Andrew Lansley suggests that

58 Q83
59 House of Commons Commission, Review of Management and Services of the House of Commons, Sir Kevin Tebbit, June 2007, para 90
60 Q130
61 Q323
the Commission was initially not as clear or definitive in its decision-making as it might have been. Secondly the respective roles and responsibilities of the Speaker and Commission in the process were not clear. The Commission has no statutory responsibility for the post of Clerk, but, judging from what Sir Alan Beith told us, has been involved to some degree in the appointment process for at least the last thirty years. Thirdly, the nature of the process in 2014 does not seem to have been pinned down in detail in advance of the recruitment process for the successor to Sir Robert Rogers. We noted above that Sir Kevin Tebbit’s recommendation in respect of the process had not been implemented. The 2011 process had not been either fully open or entirely consistent with Sir Kevin’s recommendation. Our recommendations in respect of any future appointment process are set out in paragraphs 191-197 below.

**The Clerk as Chief Executive**

64. The role of the Clerk of the House as Chief Executive has developed over time. To some extent it has mirrored the evolution of a unified House service. In 1990 in the Ibbs report the Clerk was described as *primus inter pares* in a ‘federal structure.’ In 1999 Braithwaite found that ‘many of the recent improvements in management and governance have been driven by [the Clerk], and the role of the Clerk is now much more than the *primus inter pares* described by Ibbs.’ However the federal structure remained in place and Braithwaite noted:

> Staff are formally appointed to the House service, but in practice to a Department. Moves of staff between Departments are increasing slowly but are relatively infrequent; and do not in practice happen above pay band A2 (Grade 7).

65. In 2007, Tebbit noted that the ‘Board of Management now considers House-wide issues, although these are relatively narrowly defined’ and that the ‘importance of developing more corporate behaviour by Board members is reflected in a Statement of Principles which the Board has adopted.’ Since then the prominence of the Chief Executive part of the role has been further reinforced by the implementation of Tebbit’s

62 Q81, Q323
63 Q83
64 House of Commons Services; *Report to the House of Commons Commission* by a team led by Sir Robin Ibbs, November 1990, para 36.
recommendation of an Office of the Chief Executive; and there has been continuing effort put into unifying the House service. Three former Clerks of the House, Sir William McKay, Sir Roger Sands and Sir Malcolm Jack, told us in written evidence that changes to the departmental structure after Tebbit contributed significantly to the efficiency of the unified House Service. David Natzler told us, one thing on which the Management Board was united was that ‘we value a unified service.’ Andrew Walker agreed: ‘we have seen some real benefits and improvements in services from the unification of the House Service.’ And Myfanwy Barrett said:

When I came here, you rapidly got the feeling that there was a certain culture round the Clerks in the organisation and then there was everybody else. We have worked really hard to try and break down some of those barriers to make sure that the staff feel integrated in one team and one organisation.

It is perhaps not surprising that these developments have gone together, nor, as other witnesses have told us, that as a consequence there have been significant improvements across the House service in recent years. We return to the importance of a united House service later in this report (paragraph 163).

A joint Clerk/Chief Executive is the standard model used in the UK’s devolved legislatures, although the balance between procedural and administrative work varies. Other models exist; in the Danish Folketing the Clerk is one of two deputies to the Secretary General. In the French National Assembly, there are two separate administrations, one dealing with parliamentary matters accountable to the President of the Assembly, the other responsible for ‘back office’ and support functions accountable to ‘Questeurs’ who are members of the Assembly elected by it to fulfil this role.

Our witnesses expressed a variety of views on the desirability or otherwise of splitting the roles of Clerk of the House and Chief Executive and how the two posts should be organised if they were split. The Speaker said that the Clerk and Chief Executive roles should be split; that nothing should threaten the role of the Clerk of the House as chief constitutional adviser, but that there should also be a Chief Executive focused on the management of the organisation. He told us that there should be a clear delineation of

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69 House of Commons Commission, Review of Management and Services of the House of Commons, Sir Kevin Tebbit, June 2007, para 96
70 Sir William McKay, Sir Roger Sands and Sir Malcolm Jack (GOV 010) para 14
71 Q180
72 Q197. See also John Pullinger (GOV075)
73 Q198 [Myfanwy Barrett]
74 Claire Clancy, Chief Executive and Clerk, National Assembly for Wales (GOV067), Paul Grice, Clerk/Chief Executive, Scottish Parliament (GOV076), Mitchel McLaughlin, Principal Deputy Speaker, Northern Ireland Assembly (GOV069), Trevor Reaney, Clerk of the Northern Ireland Assembly (GOV078), Carsten U Larsen, General Secretary, Danish Parliament (GOV066)
75 Corinne Luquiens, General Secretary of the National Assembly, France (GOV091)
functions between the two posts, which would minimise the overlap and the potential for disagreement, and that the Chief Executive should be the Accounting Officer. This model would appear to divide the House service into a parliamentary section headed by the Clerk and a management function headed by the Chief Executive. The Deputy Speakers told us that the Clerk of the House should be the head of the House Service and said that if there were a Chief Operating Officer or Chief Executive, they should act on the authority of the Clerk of the House; the two posts should not be parallel. They said that it was necessary to have one person in charge; that the Clerk of the House should remain the Accounting Officer; and that a Chief Operating Officer for the whole estate could be a long-term aspiration. Andrew Tyrie MP argued that the House should appoint a Chief Executive as its principal officer, ultimately responsible to the Speaker, the Commission and the House itself for the running of all House services, including procedural and parliamentary services.76 We heard a wide range of other views from Members. Some Members argued that the Clerk of the House should be the senior post. Other Members argued for two separate posts—Clerk of the House and Chief Executive—of equal status, both accountable directly to the Commission.

**People**

69. As noted above, the staff of the House are employed by the Commission, which has a statutory duty to keep their terms and conditions broadly in line with those of the Home civil service. Candidates for the Fast Stream are initially recruited within the civil service’s Fast Stream recruitment system. However, whilst House staff are not civil servants, they will naturally compare what the House offers them with what they might have expected in the civil service. As Andrew Kennon, Clerk of Committees, explained:

> Our aim has been to recruit highly capable people from the same pool as the civil service draws its fast stream to ensure that at all levels Parliament is supported by people of equal ability to the civil service. We also develop people recruited through other routes. The assumption is that the House wants to be confident that its staff are as good as (and capable of standing up to) their civil service equivalents.77

70. Throughout our inquiry we have heard testimony to the quality of the staff who work in the House of Commons. Without exception, Members praised the staff of the House. That was reinforced by Dr Emma Crewe, who has recently completed a three year study of the House told and us that she was ‘a huge champion of Parliament, but also of the officials in Parliament. My experience of observing them is that the institution is extremely well run.’78

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76 Andrew Tyrie MP (GOV057)
77 Andrew Kennon, House of Commons staff (GOV039) para 4
78 Q638
71. David Orr, previously Permanent Secretary of the Department for Regional Development in Northern Ireland and Chair of the Independent Procurement Expert Panel for Crossrail, described the Parliamentary Estates Board and the Restoration and Renewal Programme Board as ‘at least as good as other boards that I have contributed to.’

In the catering field, the House has ‘a number of very talented chefs who regularly win competitions.’ Sir Kevin Tebbit, an admitted admirer of the House service, was, however, concerned by divisions within it:

The Clerks were considered very much to be the superior beings who lived on a slightly different planet from the rest of the House Service. I thought that was not good, because I thought there were a lot of very good people indeed in other parts of the House Service, and with the way in which the world is going, with the massive transformation of technology, with the need for much greater connection with the public and the understanding of what Parliament is about, with what used to be called the Library function extending much more into a general information function, with much more emphasis on engaging with the general public and getting them in the place to understand what working democracy is like, I felt that it was very important to try to break down some of those barriers and, if you like, for the Clerks to own a much wider area of responsibility under the Members, under the Speaker.

Since then, clerks have been encouraged to take on a much wider range of responsibilities. For example, the recent project to move to a fully electronic system for parliamentary questions (including transferring the questions to and the answers from government departments) was led by a clerk. Paul Evans told us that he looked with envy at his younger colleagues ‘because they have opportunities to work in the civil service and other departments that I was never offered.’ Sir Alan Beith described the role of clerks in representing the interests of select committees which might be ‘in conflict with outside bodies or organisations who are declining to come and give oral evidence.’

**A Procedural Service?**

72. It has been almost universally agreed that key parliamentary roles, not just the Clerk of the House but also many other senior clerking jobs, require procedural and parliamentary expertise which can only be acquired through extensive experience of a wide range of...
parliamentary proceedings and processes. We have found no dissent from the proposition that the current structures have consistently delivered the authoritative and independent procedural advice which the House depends upon. As Rt Hon Sir Alan Haselhurst MP, drawing on his experience as Deputy Speaker, told us:

I have had experience in the Chair where suddenly there is some exocet of a procedural point thrown at you. You strain forward and the person in front of you, who knows much more, is able to guide you. If the person in front knew less, that would be an unfortunate situation.

73. Rt Hon Keith Vaz MP, Chair of the Home Affairs Select Committee, praised Committee staff, saying: ‘we have got people of huge talent.’ Sir Alan Beith pointed out that the role of committee clerks was not exclusively or even principally procedural:

The Clerks of Select Committees manage teams of staff and the senior Committee Clerks manage the overall resource. That management role has been encouraged and I would not want us to send the signal that it is not important.

Sir Roger Sands stressed the importance he had placed, as Clerk, on the development of ‘one unified House service.’ Sir William McKay, supported by his two colleagues, emphasised the extent to which the Clerk was bound to become involved in issues across the House service.

74. Andrew Kennon, Clerk of Committees, compared his role with that of his contemporaries in other organisations:

they are doing the same sort of thing. It is a mixture of professional knowledge, knowledge of your organisation and your ability to manage resources. No one has got promoted to a senior position in the House service in recent years who cannot do those things.

75. Other Parliaments develop their staff for the top roles. For example, Dr. Horst Risse, Secretary-General of the German Bundestag, outlined in written evidence that ‘efforts are made to place staff in as many different areas of the Administration as possible, to provide them with an opportunity to demonstrate their skills in a range of positions and gain

85 Lord Martin (GOV043), Lord Cormack (GOV049)
86 Q72
87 Q503
88 Q62 [Sir Alan Beith MP]
89 Q668
90 Qq 675-77
91 Q646
experience’ He himself had been Director General for two different areas of the administration before taking on the lead role.\textsuperscript{92}

\textbf{Staff Development and Diversity}

76. Most staff who make their careers in the House service are not clerks. They may nonetheless spend many years here developing skills and experience which are crucial to providing high quality services to Members, to staff and to the public. Many of them have been well-served by the House.\textsuperscript{93} But others, as we discovered in our discussions with them, do not believe that the same attention is paid to their career development or that equivalent opportunities to progress to senior posts are open to them.\textsuperscript{94}

77. Many organisations value their long-serving staff for the skills they have and for their institutional memory, a particularly valuable asset in a parliamentary environment, but also in other areas, where the relevant specialist skills may not be readily available elsewhere, for example in connection with the maintenance and running of a historic building. On the other hand an organisation must also bring in new blood. There is an optimum balance. Dave Penman, General Secretary, FDA, described the situation in the wider public sector:

\begin{quote}
Almost all organisations... try to blend the promotion and development of internal staff with bringing in people from outside. Usually when they get it wrong is when it goes too far one way or the other.\textsuperscript{95}
\end{quote}

78. Andrew Walker pointed out that three of the permanent members of the Management Board had been recruited from outside the organisation.\textsuperscript{96} We took evidence from a number of staff who had come into the House midway through their careers, including David Vere, Director of People Development, who joined the House in May this year and has a responsibility to assess whether the balance of training across the service is appropriate and whether ‘we are getting best value for the money that we invest as an organisation overall.’\textsuperscript{97}

79. Historically the House, at Member and staff level, has struggled to make significant progress in respect of diversity. Keith Vaz commented: ‘We should reflect the whole of the UK and we are not doing that at the moment.’\textsuperscript{98} The Parliamentary Workplace Equality Networks told us:

\begin{quote}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{92} Dr. Horst Risse, Secretary-General of the German Bundestag (GOV072)
\textsuperscript{93} Q631
\textsuperscript{94} House of Commons staff (GOV026)
\textsuperscript{95} Q419
\textsuperscript{96} Q183
\textsuperscript{97} Q634
\textsuperscript{98} Q503. See also House of Commons staff (GOV022)
The outgoing Clerk and Chief Executive proactively took on the role of House-wide Diversity Champion and his direct involvement with, and commitment to, the WENs was very strong. Regardless of the outcome of the Governance Review, it is vital that high-level commitment to the diversity agenda continues and that this aspect of the role is embedded properly and permanently into the future job description / role of the head official(s) in the House. This will help to ensure that the great advances made in this area over the last four years can be continued further and that diversity and inclusion is not seen as an ‘add on’ responsibility. The benefits of embedding diversity and inclusion in the workplace are high and well documented elsewhere: treating people with respect and recognising the value they bring to the organisation enables people to feel more comfortable being themselves at work. This ultimately leads to a better motivated and more productive workforce.99

We heard evidence which explained the House’s Diversity and Inclusion scheme and how the House was seeking to embed equality in its work and measure successes and failures.

80. Overall, whilst we think there has been significant progress in respect of staff development across the House service in recent years, there is much more to do.100 Rt Hon Peter Riddell, Director of the Institute for Government—which currently hosts a secondee—suggested the House ‘ought to be much more extensive with secondments to the private sector, to local government or wherever.’101 Andrew Kennon and David Vere both talked about increasing the opportunities for staff to move between departments and broadening the scope of roles into which staff could go on secondment.102 David Natzler told us:

We want people to get wider experience, while at the same time not diminishing their core professional expertise and knowledge, which we have to keep on producing to have any sort of succession policy.103

Culture

81. A number of witnesses emphasised the importance of culture in making governance arrangements work effectively, whilst raising concerns about the current organisational culture.104 Looking back at his time as Chair of the Administration Committee, Frank

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99 Parliamentary Workplace Equality Network (GOV082)
100 Dominic Grixti, House of Commons staff (GOV017), House of Commons staff (GOV051), House of Commons staff (GOV056), Paul Bowers, House of Commons staff (GOV084) para 5
101 Q24. See also House of Commons staff (GOV028), Information Management Directorate, DIS, House of Commons (GOV063) para 10, Eve Samson, House of Commons staff (GOV065)
102 Qq636, 647, 649
103 Q200
104 Q153 [Bernard Jenkin MP], Q147
Doran MP argued that historically the House had been ‘very slow to move things forward and custom and deference are a big part of the problem’, whilst Rt Hon Peter Hain MP described in written evidence what he called a ‘culture of aloofness which pervades [the Clerk’s] office’. Within the Management Board level there is evidence of challenge, but it could be more robust. Myfanwy Barrett told us ‘We all get on very well, we are very polite, but sometimes we do not sufficiently air an issue where we do have a difference of opinion.’ The Management Board’s own submission said that they would ‘welcome a closer, more collegiate, working culture’ with the Commission. We heard a variety of views from staff about the current management culture: for example, a member of staff argued in written evidence that ‘A culture in which constructive criticism of management proposals is welcomed and in which alternative solutions are considered would help to counter the weaknesses in the current system’.

82. The Commission itself lacks internal challenge, and, we were surprised to learn from Sir Robert Rogers, it has never reviewed its own working practices. Its relationship with the Management Board is insufficiently close to provide regular oversight or challenge. An overall preference for consensus building, accompanied by a lack of clear accountability, distracts from a focus on delivery.

83. Some commentators have suggested that there is a tension in the culture of the whole organisation, between the priority given to “parliamentary activities” and “management”. Barry Winetrobe, an academic, suggested in written evidence that this culture had developed ‘Because the ‘procedural’ has always taken precedence over the ‘institutional’, the culture and personnel of the ‘guardians of the procedural’ has prevailed even in matters which are largely, but not solely, ‘institutional’.

express the importance of deeply held traditions and symbolism which provide a central aspect of the collective culture of all who work in Parliament. We think in some quarters there is a deeply held, but maybe unexpressed concern that the rise of a more thorough-going managerial approach will lead to these traditions being replaced by a generic corporate culture which could be found in any workplace.

105 Q319 [Frank Doran MP]
106 Peter Hain MP (GOV007) para 21
107 Q184
108 Management Board (GOV021) para 6.1
109 House of Commons staff (GOV080) para 8
110 Q759
111 Barry K Winetrobe (GOV013) para 7
112 Cass Business School (GOV071) para 36
84. Paul Evans argued that the culture of the service to some extent reflected the institution it supported:

The culture of your permanent service rather reflects the culture of the body it serves, which is disparate, stubborn, hard to corral and puts a great deal of value on individual opinion, individual freedom and the right to block.\(^{113}\)

85. Andrew McDonald posed the question in his written evidence:

Does one want to reinforce the existing culture, which prizes procedural expertise above all else? Or does one want to signal that the House recognises that the quality of its leadership and management are fundamentally important. The choice is an important one. Important to the future direction and culture of the whole of the House administration.\(^{114}\)

86. Alongside this is the tension between customer service (meeting the needs and wants of individuals and groups) and stewardship of the institution (protection of the wider good). The Cass Business School noted in written evidence ‘Several interviewees commented on the need to facilitate a culture change in Parliament. There is an overarching discourse concerned with the need to introduce a ‘service culture’.”\(^{115}\) They followed with the observation:

However, it is easier to see how a service culture might operate in some areas (e.g. catering) rather than others where there is a closer relationship with the political functions of Parliament (e.g. DCCS). Some interviewees described house staff as ‘stewards’ rather than ‘service providers’, particularly in relation to aspects where clerks were required to support, but not advise or direct Members.\(^{116}\)

87. Accountability is a central concept of public service and we heard, time and again, about the importance of clarity on who is accountable and how. Bernard Jenkin MP, Chair of the Public Administration Select Committee, suggested: ‘there will not be accountability unless you have an atmosphere in which people want to accept accountability, are encouraged to take accountability and are rewarded for that accountability’.\(^{117}\)
4 What challenges does the House face?

88. The immediate reason for the establishment of this inquiry was the recruitment process for the post of Clerk of the House and Chief Executive. It did not arise from any diagnosis of systemic failure in the management of House services. As David Natzler told us:

   I think I owe it to the House Service to say that the Committee’s establishment was precipitated not by any particular failure in the provision of services to Members.\(^\text{118}\)

However, sitting behind the Committee’s establishment are longstanding concerns about the administration of the House.

89. Individual failings have been brought to our attention, some the result of poor management, some caused by the inherent complexity of this bicameral Parliament, some simply the consequence of different perspectives or experiences. Barry Sheerman MP described the House as ‘poorly managed’.\(^\text{119}\) Rt Hon Margaret Hodge MP, Chair of the Public Accounts Select Committee, told us: ‘I do not think the House works well.’\(^\text{120}\) On the other hand John Thurso, opening the debate on the finances of the House of Commons, said:

   May I also use this moment to pay tribute to all the staff who serve us throughout the House service in all areas? I truly think, having now engaged with them for the best part of four years, that had I had such a staff in private life, I would have considered it a privilege to have had them working with me. I think they can be proud of everything that they do for us and we should be very grateful for it.\(^\text{121}\)

90. But good performance in the past is no guarantee of good performance in the future, particularly not if the challenges of the future are likely to be of a different order. For the House of Commons it has been argued to us that in four areas they will be:

   - Political and constitutional change
   - Public engagement
   - The efficient use of resources

118 Q180
119 Q490 [Barry Sheerman MP]
120 Q154. See also Andrew Miller MP (GOV004) para 2, David Winnick MP (GOV006) para 2, Barbara Keeley MP (GOV038) para 5, Dr Julian Lewis MP (GOV058)
121 HC Deb, 11 November 2014, col 1334
• Restoration of the Palace of Westminster

**Political and constitutional change**

91. Neither political nor constitutional change are new challenges, but several witnesses have argued that we are in a particularly turbulent period. Rt Hon David Blunkett MP stated in written evidence:

> Substantial and projected devolution (both to the nations of the United Kingdom and in whatever form to the cities and sub regions of England), our present and future relationship with the European Union and the shift of both power and relationships in a global economy, have changed the function of the House of Commons even if this is not formally currently recognised.122

92. On 27 November 2014, following the referendum in Scotland, the Smith Commission published its proposals for the further devolution of powers to the Scottish Parliament. The proposals include giving the Scottish Parliament the power to set income tax rates and bands, and the devolution of air passenger duty. Draft clauses are scheduled to be published by 25 January 2015. In 2011, the Government set up the Silk Commission to review the financial and constitutional arrangements in Wales. The Commission’s reports have led to the Wales Bill, which is currently making its way through Parliament, and which will, among other things, devolve stamp duty land tax and landfill tax to the National Assembly for Wales. Subject to a referendum, the Bill also allows for the devolution of some income tax powers. There has also been some discussion, particularly in the wake of the referendum in Scotland, of devolving further powers to Northern Ireland.123 In England, since 2012, the Government has announced two waves of city deals, which will grant a range of powers to 28 cities in England. The Government states that the deals are intended to: “Give cities the powers and tools they need to drive local economic growth; unlock projects or initiatives that will boost their economies; and strengthen the governance arrangements of each city.”124 London is not part of the city deals, but already has devolved powers. In May 2013, the London Finance Commission proposed greater financial autonomy for London. Debate about how best to devolve powers to England has intensified since the referendum in Scotland.

93. The further devolution of powers from the UK Parliament has brought into sharp focus the West Lothian Question, which as the McKay Commission report states, ‘raises the situation that…arises when MPs from outside England could help determine laws that apply in England while MPs from England would have no reciprocal influence on laws

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122 David Blunkett MP [GOV009]
123 See the HM Treasury, *Autumn Statement 2014*, Cm 8961, December 2014
outside England in policy fields for which the devolved institutions are now responsible."125 The McKay Commission, led by the former Clerk of the House, Sir William McKay, was set up by the Government to consider how the House of Commons should deal with legislation that affects only part of the United Kingdom. It reported on 25 March 2013, but the question of whether, and if so how, to deal with the West Lothian Question remains unresolved. Likewise, if the UK were to decide to leave the European Union, the process of doing so would be complicated.

94. In addition to these challenges, it is, as Tom Watson MP noted in his written evidence, ‘by no means certain what the outcome of the next General Election will be’.126 It may result neither in a single party majority government nor a stable coalition.

95. In times such as these, it is argued, the Clerk of the House must be able to devote sufficient time and energy to wrestle with these issues. Rt Hon Sir Menzies Campbell MP told us that ‘we are about to embark in this building on a very substantial period of constitutional reform in which the Speaker and their role may become enormously significant in determining the way in which the House treats with these issues.’127 He added: ‘In those circumstances, it seems to me that the role of the Clerk will be of enormous importance.’128 David Blunkett was among those who argued that the Clerk of the House should not be distracted by the separate, and onerous, responsibilities of being also the Chief Executive.129

Public Engagement

96. The challenge of engaging the public with the work of Parliament is not new either. In recent times, it has been considered by the Modernisation Committee in its influential report *Connecting Parliament with the Public*,130 the Hansard Society Commission on the Communication of Parliamentary Democracy—known as the Puttnam Commission after its Chair, Lord Puttnam—and by the Select Committee on Reform of the House of Commons—known as the Wright Committee after its Chair, Tony Wright. Aileen Walker, Director of Public Engagement, and Lee Bridges, Director of Public Information, commented in their written evidence: “In recent years, the House of Commons has significantly developed its public information, education, outreach, and visitor services.”131 Examples of these activities include:

125 Report of the Commission on the Consequences of Devolution for the House of Commons, March 2013, p77
126 Tom Watson MP (GOV052)
127 Q286
128 Q287
129 Q176 [David Blunkett MP]. See also Q272, Tom Watson MP (GOV052)
131 Aileen Walker, Director of Public Engagement, and Lee Bridges, Director of Public Information, Department of Public Information (GOV060) para 1
a) over 70,000 children coming to the House this year on education visits;

b) another successful Parliament Week and Youth Parliament sitting in November 2014;

c) planning for events to celebrate the 750th anniversary of De Montfort’s Parliament and the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta in 2015;

d) outreach activities increasingly including select committees taking evidence outside Westminster; and

e) 13 universities now teaching a Parliamentary Studies programme supported by the House and its staff.

97. The Hansard Society Audit of Political Engagement 2014 recorded its highest ever level for knowledge of Parliament: 48 per cent of respondents said they knew ‘a fair amount’ about Parliament. However, 48 per cent is still not high. Some 67 per cent of respondents agreed that Parliament ‘is essential to our democracy’, but only 34 per cent agreed that Parliament ‘holds government to account’, which was the lowest level recorded in the five years the question had been asked, and only 23 per cent agreed that Parliament ‘encourages public involvement in politics’, compared to 30 per cent in the previous two Audits.132 These figures draw attention to the scale of the challenge. The Shadow Leader of the House, Angela Eagle MP, told us that Parliament ‘needs to make itself relevant in an anti-politics age, and reach out to an electorate that is increasingly sceptical and baffled by how we do things in this place.’133

98. The challenge of improving public engagement falls partly under the responsibilities of a Chief Executive. Improving public access to the House of Commons would principally be the responsibility of a Chief Executive: we were repeatedly reminded about the problems with lengthy queues to get into the building. The Speaker’s Commission on Digital Democracy is currently investigating the opportunities digital technology can offer for parliamentary democracy in the UK and is due to report in January 2015. It is considering, among other things, the role of technology in helping citizens to scrutinise the Government and the work of Parliament, the House’s use of social media and the internet to disseminate information, and video and webcasting. Changes to information and communication technology as a result of the Commission might also fall principally to the Chief Executive side of the role to deliver.

99. However, Members’ desire to extend the public’s engagement and involvement, will also have implications for the Clerk of the House aspect of the role, because it is likely to result in parliamentary processes that may require new rules and procedures, and because new technology may have implications for existing parliamentary practices. Two recent

133 Q264
examples of new processes that have been intended to engage the public are Public Reading Stages of Bills, which allow the public to comment on the contents of legislation, and e-petitions, which are online petitions that are eligible for consideration for debate in the House of Commons if they reach a threshold of 100,000 signatures. The Procedure Committee has recently published proposals for a collaborative e-petitions system between Government and the House of Commons.134

100. Arguably, increasing public engagement is not only about improving the way Parliament interacts with the public, but also about improving what it does. Rt Hon Frank Dobson MP commented in his written evidence: ‘I have long believed that a large part of the public disillusion with the political process results from the failure of the House to do its job as well as people expect.’ Tackling this aspect of public disengagement involves skills associated with the Clerk of the House. Frank Dobson continued:

we need the Clerk to take a more positive role, helping to identify and analyse failings in procedure and offering ways of strengthening the hands of members and improving the performance of the House in holding the executive to account as well as law making.135

Efficient use of resources

101. Parliament belongs to the people in more ways than one: it is their Parliament in the sense that Members of Parliament are the people’s elected representatives, but Parliament is also funded by the taxpayer. Linked to the challenge of engaging the public in the work of Parliament is the need to use public resources efficiently. In October 2010, the Commission set itself the target of reducing the resource budget of the House of Commons by 17 per cent in real terms between 2010/11 and 2014/15. In the Commission’s 2013/14 Annual Report, the then Clerk of the House and Chief Executive announced: ‘we exceeded our target, reducing our estimate by £2 million more than the original target of £21 million.’136 Both the Leader of the House, Rt Hon William Hague MP, and Rt Hon Sir George Young MP praised this achievement when they gave evidence,137 but Sir Paul Beresford MP, a Commission member, described the 17 per cent savings target as ‘pitiful’ and said: ‘We could do very much more.’138

102. Not everyone took the view that the House of Commons was obliged to adopt the same stringent measures as Government in a time of austerity and there is certainly a case to be made that the House of Commons must have the resources it needs to scrutinise the
Government effectively. Ken Gall, President of the Trade Union Side, commented: ‘I am quite surprised by how relaxed parliamentarians have been about the savings programme and by the way in which Parliament has followed the Executive’s policies towards the civil service.’ However, the majority of those who expressed a view saw the need for the House to continue to follow the example of the rest of the public sector in reducing its cost to the public purse. Chris Leslie MP commented: ‘The House of Commons as with other public bodies and government departments will be asked to find significant cashable savings and to order their finances in a more efficient way than ever before.’ Chris Leslie, who argued for splitting the roles of Clerk of the House and Chief Executive, stated in his written evidence:

> My principal concern relates to the financial management skills required to oversee the management of the large House of Commons budget over the medium term, not least the very significant renovation and repair works to the estate that are being considered over this period. It is imperative that any capital investment in the House of Commons estate repair is managed successfully, delivered on time and to budget.

103. The likely need to make further savings in future Parliaments could be used as an argument for a separate Chief Executive, who can concentrate on this issue, untrammelled by the responsibilities of the Clerk of the House. It is, however, worth noting that this challenge also points to the need for close working between the Clerk of the House and a Chief Executive, as the imperative is not just to ensure that the House of Commons is as efficient as it can be at a time of austerity, but to ensure that there is no diminution in its effectiveness as a legislature.

**Restoration and Renewal**

104. The challenge cited most frequently in our evidence was that presented by the need for major refurbishment of the Palace of Westminster—a project known as Restoration and Renewal (R&R). The Palace of Westminster was built in the middle of the nineteenth century and much of it has never undergone a major renovation, largely due to the difficulty of undertaking such work while the building is occupied. The most recent major renovation took place in the 1940s, after parts of the Palace suffered bomb damage during World War Two. The Palace is a Grade 1 listed building and forms part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

105. *The Restoration and Renewal of the Palace of Westminster: Pre-feasibility Study and Preliminary Strategic Business Case*, which was published in October 2012, stated:
Considering the age of the Palace of Westminster, the 60+ years that have passed since the partial post-war refurbishment, the long-term under-investment in the fabric and the intensive use to which the Palace is put, it is remarkable that it continues to function. The signs of wear and tear, the number and frequency of relatively minor floods and mechanical breakdowns, the high cost of maintaining obsolescent equipment and the large sums that are now having to be spent on aggressive maintenance and risk reduction all provide tangible evidence of the looming crisis. A growing body of surveys, consultancy reports and risk registers point to the further deterioration that will occur and the severe hazards that could occur if fundamental renovation is delayed indefinitely. It is hard to imagine how the Palace will survive for future generations to use and admire without a major mid-life overhaul.142

106. A decision on how to proceed with R&R will not be taken until after the 2015 general election. The two Houses have commissioned independent consultants to appraise the following options: “continuing repairs and replacement of the fabric and systems of the Palace over an indefinite period of time”; “a defined, rolling programme of more substantial repairs and replacement over a long period, but still working around continued use of the Palace”; and “scheduling the works over a more concentrated period with parliamentary activities moved elsewhere to allow unrestricted access to the Palace for the delivery of works.”143 Implementation of the programme is likely to begin in the 2020 Parliament. The overall cost of R&R is not yet known. Alex Jablonowksi, a former external member of the Management Board, referred to it as “a very complicated, £1-billion-plus refurbishment”.144 The Leader of the House was one of many witnesses to draw our attention to the challenge it presented, referring to “the immensity of the task”.145

107. For some, R&R was an argument for rethinking the allocation of the roles of Clerk of the House and Chief Executive. Angela Eagle commented:

Restoration and renewal is the obvious trigger for doing something different…It would be a good idea if we tried to prepare for the huge upheaval that restoration and renewal will lead to. We should get ourselves in the best possible position to deliver it without having any major disaster strike us, because the reputational damage will be huge if we get it wrong.146

144 Q101
145 Q248. See also: Chris Leslie MP (GOV045), Frank Dobson MP (GOV027), Peter Davis (GOV050) para 1
146 Q272
108. However, David Natzler, the Acting Clerk of the House, told us: “one of the good reasons for creating a chief executive role is not the need to have someone who can oversee restoration and renewal of the Palace.” He commented:

There is simply no way that we as a Management Board or the House of Commons Commission would imagine we would be overseeing and running such an enormous programme, whatever decision is eventually taken about the phasing of restoration and renewal. The generally accepted and published concept is the creation of some sort of separate delivery organisation, broadly on Olympic lines.\textsuperscript{147}

The Chair of F&S, John Thurso, also told us: ‘We will almost certainly have to compose a delivery body. It will be something like the Olympic delivery body.’\textsuperscript{148}

109. In this scenario, the challenge facing both Houses would be that of being an intelligent client in order to provide the delivery body with a clear brief from which to work. Sir David Higgins, the former Chief Executive of the Olympic Delivery Authority, told us: ‘The key thing about the client role is that the client has to be clear on what the client…wants in terms of scope, but, having authorised the delivery partner to proceed, there is no point in having the client…trying to watch over the delivery partner’s shoulder or trying to meddle.’\textsuperscript{149} The challenge of being an intelligent client for R&R would call for both adept managerial acumen and a deep understanding of Parliament and its processes. It would be about delivering not simply a building in which thousands of people work and which thousands of people visit every day, but a fully functional Parliament for the 21\textsuperscript{st} century. Rt Hon Sir Alan Duncan MP told us: ‘The Palace of Westminster is a Parliament first and a building second.’\textsuperscript{150} We discuss later in the report how the challenge presented by R&R, and in particular, the possibility of creating a statutory delivery body to deliver the programme, might also create opportunities for the governance of the House of Commons in the longer term.

Overall

110. The challenges facing Parliament are not new, but they are arguably of a different magnitude to the challenges of the recent past. Rt Hon Margaret Beckett MP suggested: ‘the challenges before us in the future are going to be enormous.’\textsuperscript{151} Some—the constitutional and political changes—will call more on the skills associated with the Clerk of the House and others—the efficient use of public resources—more on the skills associated with a Chief Executive. The size and number of challenges suggest that one

\textsuperscript{147} Q181 [David Natzler]  
\textsuperscript{148} Q90 [John Thurso]  
\textsuperscript{149} Q560  
\textsuperscript{150} Sir Alan Duncan MP (GOV046)  
\textsuperscript{151} Q733
person may struggle to find the time to deal with them all, even if they had the necessary skills. But none of the challenges can be tackled in isolation. In every case, the challenges will need to be tackled by a Clerk of the House and Chief Executive working closely together, with a shared outcome in mind. Sir David Higgins’s description of his close working relationship with Paul Deighton, Chief Executive of the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games, provides an example of working jointly to achieve an agreed outcome: ‘When I was at the Olympic Delivery Authority, my key relationship was with Lord Deighton—Paul Deighton at the time—and just the two of us would meet every week for half an hour to talk about any agenda.’152
5 Our proposals

111. Before we set out our proposals in detail it is important to note the unique challenges which any governance arrangements will face in the particular context of the House of Commons. In the words of Sir Kevin Tebbit, who spent six months as ‘a sort of temporary Officer of the House’,

> It is very difficult to say anything emphatic about the House of Commons and the way it operates. … there is an alchemy here—a curious combination of effects which produces a unique result—and you tamper with it, to some extent, at your peril.\(^\text{153}\)

112. As we noted above, the House is sovereign. It may change its procedures at any time in ways which have significant resource consequences. Issues of apparently minor importance may suddenly be escalated to a question in the Chamber or a news item in the national media. Alongside individual Members there are a wide range of variously engaged and variously influential groups with a stake in how the House is run.\(^\text{154}\) Governance structures are important but they can only be part of any solution. At best they may, in Sir Robert Rogers’s phrase, provide the organisational framework which the ‘organism’ that is the House of Commons will inhabit.\(^\text{155}\)

113. There is a short term problem which needs to be resolved: how the responsibilities currently exercised by the Clerk of the House as Chief Executive should be allocated in future. But that question cannot sensibly be answered in isolation. The responsibilities and authority of a Chief Executive are defined and constrained by the governance structures in which s/he operates. We have heard compelling evidence that the governance structures in the House of Commons are themselves in need of reform. There are challenges and opportunities ahead which it has been argued will be met successfully only if Parliament-wide governance structures are overhauled.

114. It is nearly 40 years since the governance of the House of Commons was last considered by a committee of its Members. That was the Bottomley Committee whose recommendations led directly to the introduction of the House of Commons Administration Act 1978.\(^\text{156}\) Starting with Sir Robin Ibbs in 1990 there have been successive reviews of services by eminent external experts. Their recommendations have been instrumental in shaping the modern House service which we have today.
115. Our remit is to consider the governance of the House of Commons in the round. It is wider than the specific question of the roles of the Clerk and Chief Executive. Consequently our responsibility is to look further ahead than its resolution alone: it is to respond to the challenges which the House will face in the future and to propose governance arrangements fit to meet them. It is for this reason that we set out those challenges in some detail in the previous chapter.

116. We have been counselled against delaying necessary, if limited, reforms that could be achieved now in the hope of delivering a comprehensive package at some future date. This is sound advice. But equally we should not take actions now which might prejudice or obstruct our longer term objectives. As Sir Amyas Morse, Comptroller and Auditor General, told us:

> It is important to have a mid-term picture. I have two things that I could easily throw in as an observer: first, the refurbishment of the Palace of Westminster; and, secondly, the possibility of achieving more efficiency by combining what I would describe as the back-office administration, and so forth, of the House. Those are big prizes, where significant things might happen. Whatever you decide now should keep the pathway open to achieving those things. If I were advising you, I would advise you to think about that.157

117. Our proposals are therefore designed to address the immediate issues facing the House and its governance arrangements, but to do so in a way that sets a path to our longer term objectives. We have accordingly set them out in two parts: longer term objectives and actions to be taken now. We then describe how we believe the latter should be implemented. Because we need to maintain our focus on the long term objectives, where perhaps the greatest prizes are, we address them first.

**In the longer term**

118. Bicameral Parliaments are based upon a belief that a constructive tension and dialogue between the two Houses should result in a better quality of legislation and of the other key functions of a Parliament than is possible in unicameral systems. It is inherent in any genuinely bicameral system that each House should be autonomous from the other. Nothing in our consideration which follows is in any way designed to undermine that. But this does not mean, and has not meant for many decades past, that there is not great scope for the two Houses sharing services. Shared services, that is services provided to both Houses by one body, already account for nearly half the annual resource spend of each House. They range from public-facing functions such as education and visitor services to

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157 Q33 [Sir Amyas Morse]
more ‘back office’ roles like archives and procurement. Some functions, such as security, estates and ICT can sensibly be delivered only on a bicameral basis.

119. These services are provided through three principal models:

a) Joint procurement: the two Houses contract with a third party to provide a service to both Houses, with each House paying a share of the cost. The most significant example of this model is the main security arrangements which are currently provided by the Metropolitan Police Service under a five-year agreement.

b) Recharged costs: staff of one House provide services to both, but recharge a fixed proportion of the costs to the other. The most significant example of this model is estates. The Parliamentary Estates Directorate (PED), based in the Commons’ Department of Facilities, manages the Parliamentary Estate on behalf of both Houses. While the majority of services provided under this model are hosted by the Commons, the Parliamentary Archives and Parliamentary Procurement and Commercial Services are hosted by the Lords.

c) Joint departments: Under the Parliament (Joint Departments) Act 2007, the Corporate Officers of the two Houses can establish joint departments as separate entities to deliver services to Parliament as a whole. To date, the only example of a joint department is PICT.

120. For each of these areas, arrangements are in place to plan services on a bicameral basis. These arrangements vary depending on the scale and nature of the service provided: in the case of estates, for example, there is a Parliamentary Estates Board; for smaller services there may just be a Memorandum of Understanding between the budget holders in the two Houses. The ratios on which the costs are shared are intended to divide spending broadly in line with the benefit to each House. A review has recently updated and simplified these arrangements.

121. There is wide support, in principle, to extend the use of shared services to other areas. The Speaker said that there was scope to explore the capacity for more shared services between the two Houses. The Deputy Speakers told us that merging more services with the House of Lords could lead to savings. The Lord Speaker told us that most shared services worked well and that there was no lack of interest in the Lords in further shared services. John Thurso, who has experience of both Houses, in addition to his role of Chair of F&S, suggested that it makes no sense to have two catering departments on one estate and that whether the Libraries should be included in shared services was ‘on the cusp’. Others have argued that many other services could be provided more effectively and efficiently if
shared. Exactly what could be included in these shared services would need careful consideration. Alex Jablonowski referred to ‘back office’ services.160

122. In New Zealand, Members decided at a relatively late stage in the establishment of their Parliamentary Service that Hansard should be included in the Clerk’s Office:

The one area of initial uncertainty was Hansard. But when the connection to proceedings test was applied it was abundantly clear that Hansard was appropriately attached to the Clerk’s Office.161

123. In Australia finance and HR are managed individually by each House but Facilities, Hansard, the Library, ICT and security are delivered by a joint Department of Parliament Services.162 In Canada, where most services are provided separately to each House, the Parliamentary Library serves both Houses but is run separately from either reflecting its independence and impartiality.163

124. Where services are not provided jointly, there is often close co-operation between the Houses. For example, the Catering and Retail Services of the two Houses work together on many procurements (increasingly now that we have a joint procurement service).164 The two Libraries also collaborate in many ways, though a full merger would be costly if it meant that the level of service provided to Members of the House of Commons were offered to Members of the House of Lords. We were told in written evidence that, in procedural matters, the Committee and Public Bill Offices of the two Houses, and the Hansard teams work closely together.165

125. In the longer term, it has been argued, major efficiency gains could be achieved by bringing those services which are best or most effectively delivered on a bicameral basis together into a single organisation supporting both Houses which would be headed by a Chief Executive with a track record in the delivery of services. It will be vital to consider the effectiveness, as well as the efficiency of services. The Lord Speaker said that some aspects of a Services Directorate serving both Houses would work and some would not and that in principle, a Chief Operating Officer for all common administrative services sounded sensible, provided that there was a recognition that the Lords worked differently and some areas would not be cost effective to merge. The Speaker told us that, in an ideal world, there would be one Chief Executive for the whole building—that is to say, covering both Houses of Parliament—but that in the absence of such an arrangement, the House of Commons...
should appoint a Chief Executive. Alex Jablonowski, Andrew Lansley, Rt Hon Baroness Royall and many others argued that the best structure would be a single Parliamentary Services Department supporting both Houses of Parliament. The South African Parliament is supported by a single parliamentary service, providing support both for core parliamentary business and wider administrative services, which is headed by a single Secretary to Parliament, in effect a chief executive officer.

126. We support the development of plans for a single services department supporting both Houses, but, if effective progress is to be made, cultural as well as institutional barriers will need to be removed. One House cannot dictate to the other in this regard. Baroness Royall warned us:

I do not mean to be rude, but what is really important about whatever decisions are taken by this committee … is that by default, as it were, you are not taking decisions that have implications for us. That is not to say that we would not agree with what you are saying, but it is quite a delicate issue.

127. The Clerk of the Parliaments proposed a review:

I wonder whether a better approach might be to step back, review what we have done, think where we might go further, and possibly even get somebody external … to see how the various models that we have work, and in particular to see what the benefits would be in further cases.

128. This would be a good starting point. It should happen soon. Other steps should also be taken to build confidence between Members of the two Houses. The Clerk of the Parliaments drew our attention to the ‘increasingly successful twice-yearly joint meetings’ of the Audit Committees of the two Houses. The House of Lords equivalent to the Commission is the House Committee. Unlike the Commission, it is not a statutory body, but it is the principal supervisory body for the administration of the House. It has 12 members, all of whom are peers, and it is chaired by the Lord Speaker. The Lord Speaker told us that there were currently no regular meetings between the Commission and the House Committee and that it would be beneficial to have informal meetings of the two bodies about twice a year to talk about the issues that lie ahead. She commented that each House needed to be sensitive to the other when making decisions which affected both and that informal discussions in advance would generally be helpful. It is surprising that there are not regular joint meetings of the Commission and the House Committee. There are joint meetings at official level, but strategic governance is a matter for the Members of both

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166 Qq131, 328 [Andrew Lansley MP], Q472 [Baroness Royall]
167 Masibulele Xaso, Secretary to the National Assembly, South Africa (GOV095)
168 Q478
169 Q435
170 Q443
Houses. **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.** In our view, there is a case for quarterly meetings.

129. There has been a recent agreement by the Commission and the House Committee to implement the recommendations of a review conducted by Sir Paul Jenkins in respect of a bicameral structure for security. The security of Parliament is obviously of fundamental importance to its ability to fulfil its role. At the same time, there need to be clear governance arrangements to ensure: a) that, except in an immediate emergency, security concerns should never override a Member’s constitutional right of access to Parliament or any other Privilege, and b) that there are protections in place to ensure that Members’ communications are not subject to interference, including surveillance and interception, as enshrined in the Wilson doctrine and other codes. Taking account of these considerations, we consider that the governance of security arrangements should be subject to approval by both Houses. Security policy should be a regular item on the agendas of the joint meetings of the Commission and House Committee. Between those meetings an effective executive oversight body is needed. Our preference, on the basis of the discussions we have had, is to appoint a joint sub-committee of the Commission and the House Committee comprising the Speaker and Lord Speaker, the two Clerks and one other Member from each House to fulfil this role. We accept that our proposal may need further consideration. We recommend in Chapter 7 the establishment of an implementation team, which might take on that further work.

130. These measures should help to build up the confidence of Members of both Houses in the effectiveness of shared services and in their responsiveness to the different needs of the two Houses. They should also clarify and give greater definition to the benefits of establishing a single organisation responsible for the whole range of shared services. **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.**

131. One way of accelerating this process, and one of the keys to achieving it, will be the Restoration and Renewal Programme.

**Restoration and Renewal**

132. No decisions have been taken yet on the scope, scale or timing of the restoration and renewal of the Palace of Westminster. The consultants’ report on options for the way forward will be published in June/July 2015. The three options being considered for R&R are set out in paragraph 106. That is expected to be followed by the establishment of a joint committee. The work itself may require a decanting from the Palace to temporary accommodation; and the establishment of a statutory delivery authority to take on the R&R programme itself. The two Houses would need to set up a single client function to
work with that authority. The process as a whole might be overseen by a steering committee of Members of both Houses, including members of the Commission and the House Committee.

133. It will be for the next Parliament, and the joint committee in particular, to develop the detailed governance arrangements to deliver R&R, but both the client function and the delivery authority will be acting on behalf of both Houses. They will be an opportunity thoroughly to test the potential scope of shared services across the two Houses. If R&R is to succeed, it must be a whole Parliament venture. We believe R&R provides an extraordinary opportunity to reimagine the way in which the Palace of Westminster can be used to support the democratic processes of effective government. It must reflect the specifically parliamentary purposes of the House of Commons and the Lords; ideally the client relationship must be led by the Clerks of both Houses.

134. The delivery authority itself may be a model for the provision of services to both Houses following R&R and this should be considered as part of the review of shared services suggested by the Clerk of the Parliaments. Legislation might allow for the delivery authority’s continuation, subject to the agreement of both Houses, as a statutory body providing certain defined services to both Houses on the basis of a series of detailed Service Level Agreements. Because of the existence of the Delivery Authority, R&R is not in and of itself a consideration that bears directly on whether or not the roles of Clerk and Chief Executive should be split.
6 A Modern Governance Structure

Actions to be taken now

135. Our inquiry has shone a light on areas of weakness in the House’s current capability to manage the challenges it will face in the future and identified areas for improvement. The prospect of R&R has additionally focused minds on what the House will need if it is to handle a major programme involving strategic change.

136. Some capacity building might be achieved through changes to structures and responsibilities, including introducing a greater focus on follow-up and delivery, but, if these changes are to work, there must also be a culture change both in the approach of the House service to transparency and accountability and among Members in taking responsibility for strategic decisions and supporting the staff responsible for their operational delivery.

137. The House is a unique institution in which the distinct and special constitutional position of its Members must be protected, but that must not be used as an excuse for poor management or confused decision-making and accountability. However, clear decision-making does not necessarily mean quick decision-making. There is merit, in an organisation as complex as the House of Commons with 650 Members as well as many other stakeholders, in taking time to reach a decision with as broad support as possible and whose wider consequences are properly understood and managed.

The Deputy Speakers

138. We believe that the election of the Deputy Speakers is a powerful argument for increasing their involvement in non-Chamber issues (the Chairman of Ways and Means is separately responsible for private business and business in Westminster Hall). We also believe that there would be wider benefits from developing the concept of a Speakership team. A modest first step in this direction might be a widening of the agenda of the daily conferences, perhaps initially just on Mondays which both starts the working week and is the day on which the House sits latest. This might be an effective way of bringing the Deputy Speakers’ experience and wisdom to bear on wider House issues, including managerial issues.

171 Q72
172 Q713
139. **Our recommendations for reform of the Commission focus first on ensuring that its remit adequately covers those responsibilities which should properly fall to the senior governance body and second on giving it the capability to discharge those responsibilities.**

140. **They are that:**

a) **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;**

b) **its members should be:**

— **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 (see paragraph 156).**

141. We see no need for statutory change in respect of the procedures of the Commission. The Speaker should continue to be its statutory chair. However, there may be occasions when s/he does not wish, or is for some reason unable, to fulfil that role. In such circumstances, on a proposition from the Speaker, the Commission should be able to agree to one of the elected backbench members taking the chair in the Speaker’s place. The Leader of the House, William Hague, told us that the Commission proceeded on a collective basis. Andrew Lansley was clear that the Commission should be a consensus-seeking body, willing to 'refer back and reconsider and consult more on things where there was no consensus.' We agree and would expect the prospect of formal voting in the Commission to be an extremely rare occurrence. However, if it were to arise, we are clear that neither the external nor the official members should formally have a vote, although if necessary they should be able to record their dissent.

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173 The 1978 Act provides for one member to be nominated by the Leader of the Opposition. In practice this has always been the Shadow Leader.

174 Q242

175 Q312 [Andrew Lansley MP]
142. If the Commission is to take on the role of setting the strategic framework for the delivery of services and then providing strategic oversight of how they are delivered, it follows that its compass should include all matters relating to the House administration including those for which the Speaker has ex officio responsibility, such as his role as ‘householder’ and in respect of Freedom of Information policy. We recommend that the Speaker, as far as possible, consults the Commission in the exercise of these responsibilities and powers.

143. Increasing the backbench members to four should achieve two ends. It should increase the ability of the Commission to represent the full spectrum of views in the House and it should decrease the likelihood that any future Government will inadvertently end up with a majority on the Commission (a concern raised with us by the Shadow Leader of the House).\textsuperscript{176} We support the idea of portfolio responsibilities for the elected members of the Commission. In respect of finance this is in effect a role already filled by the Chair of F&S. The Chair of the Administration Committee recommended that the occupant of his post should also be on the Commission. Chair of the Administration Committee would be an appropriate position to be held by a portfolio lead on services to Members and their staff. The chair of neither committee is currently subject to House-wide election. Appointing elected backbench members of the Commission to the posts would in our view increase their legitimacy and authority within the House.

144. The overlap between F&S and Administration is unfortunate, and the former’s role in assessing recommendations of the latter has not worked well. Sir Kevin Tebbit counselled us against a three-tier structure.\textsuperscript{177} If a version of the present committee structure is to work, it will be important that the two committees (F&S and Administration) have equal status and clear and distinct remits. Finance can never be separated entirely from services, but if our recommendations relating to the chairs of the committees are implemented, the Commission will be an effective place for them to come together. The existing protocol between the Commission and the Administration Committee (originally agreed in 2005) will need to be reviewed. Both the committees are essentially advisory and their remits and the delineation of responsibilities will need to be agreed with the Commission. Experience in the present Parliament, for example in respect of the savings programme for F&S and catering and retail for Administration, has shown that their advice can be compelling. Sir Alan Haselhurst told us that 77 per cent of the Administration Committee’s recommendations had been accepted.\textsuperscript{178}

145. We recommend that the Finance and Services Committee be renamed the Finance Committee to distinguish its responsibilities from those of the Administration Committee.

\textsuperscript{176} Q258
\textsuperscript{177} Q793
\textsuperscript{178} Q86
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.

146. The portfolio responsibilities of the other two elected backbench members of the Commission should be allocated to them by the Commission and may change over time. They should reflect the Commission's responsibilities for setting the strategic framework. One of them, for example, might have a role in respect of preparations for R&R. Another area of importance is the interests of constituents and other members of the public. Our constituents sent us here: it is their Parliament. It is important to capture and act on their experience of engaging with the House, whether in person or digitally. In our view the long-running saga of queues at the Cromwell Green entrance might have been gripped more effectively and more quickly if there had been a strong voice on the Commission speaking up for those left standing in the rain.

147. If the backbench members are also to be portfolio leads, we believe it should be incumbent on any Member standing for election to the Commission to state that s/he will be prepared to devote a significant amount of time (at least two or three days a month) to Commission duties. We also expect each of them to answer oral and written parliamentary questions relevant to their portfolios. We have noted the suggestion from Lord Kirkwood, who was a member of the Commission between 1997 and 2005, drawing on his experience as a member of the General Medical Council, that members of the Commission:

… should be expected to submit themselves to continuous professional development during their term of office and be invited to take appropriate courses in for example Auditing & Risk analysis and any other subjects that would better equip them as members of the Commission.\(^{179}\)

In light of this commitment and the increased role which we envisage for the Commission itself, we believe that the backbench members of the Commission who are not select committee chairs should still have the status of select committee chairs. We propose that these members of the Commission should be referred to as 'Commons Commissioners'.

148. We have referred above to the potential for involving the Deputy Speakers more in House administration. We have not discussed with them or taken evidence on the best way of achieving this, but we note that the Chairman of Ways and Means is currently a member of F&S. There may be scope to include the others on the new Administration Committee, or possibly the Audit Committee.

\(^{179}\) Lord Kirkwood (GOV061) para 5. See also Simon Cramp (GOV079) para 8
149. The Commission should also consider how knowledge of its work can be better disseminated to Members and staff, including publishing papers and minutes. For example, Hazel Blears told us:180

Work could be done to ensure that the decisions that you make and the matters that you are considering are highlighted to Parliament. If people realised what the work entailed, you might then get more of them wanting to be a part of what is going on. It is shrouded in mystery at the moment and there needs to be much more transparency.

150. The suggestion that the Commission might hold regular informal events to meet groups of staff and to listen to their concerns was endorsed by Lawrence Ward, Serjeant at Arms, and Robin Fell, Principal Doorkeeper.181 The Commission might also consider meeting in public on appropriate occasions. Interestingly, the South African Parliament holds quarterly Consultative Forums to facilitate the input of Members of Parliament on matters related to Members’ facilities which are attended by the chairs of committees of the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces as well as chairs of party caucuses and party representatives.182

151. It is important to emphasise that our recommendation for portfolio leads is not a recommendation that they should be representatives or delegates for those interests on the Commission. Rather their responsibility should be to ensure that the decisions of the Commission are properly informed by those interests. Dame Rosemary Butler, Presiding Officer of the National Assembly for Wales, told us in written evidence that asking Commissioners to specialise in a part of the administration had been effective in the National Assembly for Wales.183

**Members’ Estimate Committee**

152. Currently the Members’ Estimate Committee (MEC) has the same membership as the Commission and generally meets at the same time. Indeed meetings can move between Commission and MEC business almost seamlessly. However, because the MEC is a committee of the House, including non-Members in its membership would not be straightforward. There are three options:

a) make no changes: MEC business would need to be taken separately from Commission business, with non-MEC members of the Commission taking no part;

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180 Q309 [Hazel Blears MP]
181 Q386
182 Masibulele Xaso, Secretary to the National Assembly, South Africa (GOV095)
183 Dame Rosemary Butler, Presiding Officer National Assembly for Wales (GOV068)
b) adopt a similar approach to that taken with lay members of the Standards Committee: non-Member members attend but cannot vote;

c) amend the 1978 Act to make the Commission responsible for MEC business (Members’ allowances/salaries not covered by IPSA, Members’ pension fund, Short money).

153. MEC business is a small and decreasing proportion of total Commission/MEC business. Option a) is a practicable solution in the short term. But if the Commission wishes to propose option b) or c), we would be happy to support their decision.

**Management Board**

154. Under our proposals the Commission will take a more active responsibility for setting the strategic direction while delegating its implementation to officials. The body to which that delegation is made needs

i) To have a closer but more clearly defined relationship with the Commission; and

ii) To be more directly focused on driving implementation.

155. We have heard criticisms from staff and members that the Management Board is too remote. Lawrence Ward told us that it was ‘quite distant from Members’ activities’ and that ‘on more occasions than not, it has become fairly irrelevant to the running of the House.’

The Speaker told us that the Management Board needed a clearer role and to interact more effectively with the Commission.

**Executive committee**

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.

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. This distinction has similarities with the division of responsibilities
between the Cabinet Secretary and the Chief Executive of the Civil Service, with that operating in the NAO between the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) and the Chief Operating Officer, which was described to us by Michael Whitehouse, and with the arrangements in many professional services firms. The role of Director General of the House of Commons has some elements of a Chief Executive and some of a Chief Operating Officer. But it does not exactly mirror either. It is a solution which responds to the particular challenges of the unique parliamentary environment of the House of Commons. It is for this reason that we have proposed a different title, one that emphasises the authority of the post and will also allow it to evolve unburdened by preconceptions. Consideration might be given to whether s/he should be an additional Accounting Officer on the model which was adopted in the Crown Prosecution Service (see paragraph 16).

158. One consequence of calling the new role Director General of the House of Commons is that existing Director General posts for departments might be conveniently re-named as Directors. This would then reflect the fact of the seniority and status of the Director General. This would be a good moment to make this change as several of these posts are currently held by Acting Director Generals.

159. We have heard that there has been a proliferation of boards and groups below the Management Board level, but their roles and their relationships to each other and to the Management Board are not always clearly understood. The two Houses are currently in the process of establishing a new bicameral Digital Service, but there are also separate proposals for a new bicameral Investment Board which given the importance of investment in ICT could have overlapping responsibilities. The Executive Committee will need to rationalise this situation and establish clear and transparent lines of management accountability. *The priority must be to reduce layers of bureaucracy not increase them.*

**The roles of Clerk and Chief Executive**

160. The Leader of the House, William Hague, emphasised the importance of the role of the Clerk of the House:

> The House has to be able to have confidence in the Clerk in so many different ways, and in the quality of advice—indeed, not only this House: since the advice of the Clerk is sought on occasions by Parliaments across the Commonwealth, there has to be international confidence in the expertise of the Clerk. ... I think the independence of the Clerk is of paramount importance. Appointment by letters patent is intended to entrench that. It is important that the Clerk can give advice without fear or favour to all Members of the House, including the Speaker. I think it would be very
Regrettably if any official or executive were able to hire or fire the Clerk at any stage, so independence is important.\textsuperscript{186}

None of our witnesses has dissented from this view. Although formally the Clerk’s accountability is to the Crown in Parliament, in practice his or her performance is subject to daily scrutiny in and by the House. In this respect absolute constitutional independence is tempered by political and parliamentary reality. We have taken it as a matter of first importance that any changes we might recommend do nothing to undermine the position of the Clerk in this respect.\textsuperscript{187}

161. If our recommendations for the reinforcement of the role of the House of Commons Commission and for the introduction of clear and public delegations of decision-making authority are accepted, the House administration will be better led and more capable of delivering responsive and effective services to Members, staff and the public. These changes should go a long way to address the problems of confused decision-making and slow and inadequate follow-up which have sometimes been cited in support of the case for a separate Chief Executive equivalent or senior to the Clerk.

162. Under our proposals the Clerk and the Director General of the House of Commons would operate visibly as a team/partnership. Michael Whitehouse emphasised that one of the strengths of the NAO model was that he and the C&AG were ‘very much a team.’\textsuperscript{188} Being able to demonstrate the skills and aptitude necessary to do so effectively should be a key element of the job specification of each role:

\begin{quote}

The selection process for both jobs would select someone who was good at working with other people, good at delegating, someone who was not going to interfere the whole time.\textsuperscript{189}
\end{quote}

163. Staff from whom we received (formal and informal) evidence varied widely in their opinions as to whether the Clerk, or a Chief Executive should be the senior, but were generally agreed that there would be considerable problems of accountability if neither was even \textit{primus inter pares}. Many of them argued strongly for a single unified service and believed that two equal heads would militate against its achievement.\textsuperscript{190} It is apparent that significant progress has been made towards this objective in recent years, but, as others have told us, there is still a long way to go. A single head of service was urged upon us by most of our outside witnesses, who also argued that the post should be filled by someone focussed on the organisation’s primary purpose. \textit{We fully support the objective of securing a fully unified House service.} Indeed, we have seen its benefits at first hand: the staff

\begin{footnotesize}

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\item\textsuperscript{186} Q251
\item\textsuperscript{187} Julia Vanoli, House of Commons staff (GOV015), House of Commons staff (GOV016), Lord Blencathra (GOV040)
\item\textsuperscript{188} Q350
\item\textsuperscript{189} Q322
\item\textsuperscript{190} Qq393, 397 [Oonagh Gay], Qq614, 619. See also Research Directorate, DIS, House of Commons (GOV070) para 8
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
supporting this committee were drawn from different departments across the House service.

164. The temporary arrangements put in place following the retirement of Sir Robert Rogers should not be allowed to continue any longer than is absolutely necessary. As Dame Janet Gaymer told us, the House service is ‘effectively leaderless’. Our first priority, therefore, must be to find a way of resolving this situation as soon as possible. The primary purpose of the House of Commons is to fulfil its role as a democratic parliamentary assembly. To introduce a Chief Executive above the Clerk would require the development of mechanisms to ensure the Clerk’s continuing independence in matters relating to parliamentary procedure and privilege. It is not clear how this would be achieved; or what unintended consequences of trying to achieve it there might be. Direct interaction between the House and the judiciary is and should be rare. Rt Hon Lord Judge said he could remember ‘only one occasion when such an issue had arisen.’ He told us that ‘from the point of view of the judiciary … I would say that we need somebody who exercises the functions that the Clerk currently exercises’.

165. Furthermore, as Sir Alan Beith explained, the Clerk’s independence is ‘reflected in the authority held by the Clerk of each Select Committee… you need not only very good knowledge of the procedures and rules, but unquestioned authority: if the Clerk of the House says this, it must be acted upon.’

166. We have therefore concluded that the Clerk should continue to be the Head of the House service (and thus formally the line manager of the Director General). However, since delivery will be the responsibility of the Director General of the House of Commons, s/he should chair the Executive Committee and take lead responsibility for its agenda. Membership of the Commission will also give him or her direct access to the Speaker and other Commission members. S/he should be a very visible presence to Members. We recommend that the Commission consider what arrangements might be made to enable the Director General of the House of Commons to be visibly present in his or her official capacity in the Chamber when business relating to his or her responsibilities is under consideration.

167. For this model to work there will need to be clear delineation between the responsibilities of the Clerk and the Director General of the House of Commons together with transparent and detailed delegations.

191 Q121
192 Q661
193 Q781
194 Q90 [Sir Alan Beith MP]
195 Martin Horwood MP (GOV003), House of Commons staff (GOV020), House of Commons staff (GOV035)
168. The Director General of the House of Commons will have responsibility for resource allocation and delivery across the House service. In this respect the role will achieve what Sir Kevin Tebbit told us he would have liked to have been able to do:

   Had other things been different I would have created a much stronger role for the finance and administration function, and probably put that in a much stronger position in relation to the Clerk.\textsuperscript{196}

But, as a member of the Commission, the Director General of the House of Commons will also be its executive arm, accountable to it, but also acting with its delegated authority. The Director General of the House of Commons will be responsible for determining the level of resources required to support the House across all its functions and to provide assurance to the Clerk, as Accounting Officer, that they have been used effectively and efficiently.

169. A key role of the Clerk of the House, as Head of the House service, will be to provide strategic leadership to the service overall. S/he will need to develop his or her role as the representative and figurehead of all parts of the House and a thorough understanding of how the challenges facing each area of service delivery might impact on the core work of Parliament. Members and staff should be able to recognise a step-change in the wider knowledge this role displays in the future.

170. We have heard evidence that the post is currently overloaded; that neither part of it is therefore given the attention it deserves. Two important areas which would benefit from more attention (and for which the Clerk should be responsible) are stewardship and strategic thinking. The weakness of both functions in the House has been raised by several witnesses;\textsuperscript{197} the Clerk would be well-placed to support the Commission in the development and effective communication of an overarching framework in both areas. The Clerk will need to be demonstrably expert in parliament’s core business and s/he will have more time to devote to procedural and related issues. It is likely in the context of the parliamentary and constitutional challenges (described above) that this will become more acute. Two other important matters for the Clerk will be R&R (for which s/he will have shared responsibility with the Director General of the House of Commons) and relations with the House of Lords. However, we recognise the strength of the argument, which informed the Tebbit recommendations, that in a unified service the Head of the Service should not also be a head of one of the component departments.\textsuperscript{198}

171. We have therefore concluded that there would have to be strong countervailing arguments if the Clerk of the House were to revert to being the Head of the DCCS. However, s/he will be much more closely engaged in the day to day Chamber-related work which is currently the primary responsibility of the Clerk Assistant. The Clerk of the House

\textsuperscript{196} Q787 [Sir Kevin Tebbit]
\textsuperscript{197} Qq141, 139
\textsuperscript{198} Q745
of course will remain ‘Head of Profession’ and guarantor that the legislative and scrutiny roles of the House are protected. We take very seriously the Leader of the House’s argument that we should not ‘increase the cost of the overall system’\(^{199}\) and we come back to this point in paragraphs 206 to 207 below. We expect the House service to ensure that the changes in the responsibilities of the most senior posts in DCCS are fully reflected in the number and grading of those posts. **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.**

**Our proposals as a package**

172. Our proposals for reform to the Commission, to Member committees, to the Management Board and to senior posts are intended to be a coherent whole. They are a package in which each part supports the others. Overall they will deliver the following key benefits:

- A coherent management and strategic leadership structure in which the Member and official elements are properly integrated for the first time;
- Clarity in the respective roles of Members and officials;
- The Clerk and Director General of the House of Commons are explicitly a leadership team;
- The small size of the Executive Committee will require a clearer and more transparent system of delegations to individuals including heads of departments with responsibility for particular services;
- They can be implemented without immediate organisational restructuring: the Executive Committee would be expected to review structures and implement any changes within a specific timescale;
- An Executive Committee focused on corporate leadership should reinforce the message that the House is supported by a unified service (and the Clerk and Director General of the House of Commons should give a joint commitment to moving staff between departments and to collaborative working).

173. However, there will also be challenges. Our proposals introduce significant changes which will need to be carefully and sensitively managed. The non-departmental structure of the Executive Committee may be perceived as diminishing the roles of Heads of

\(^{199}\) Q252. See also House of Commons staff (GOV014), James Camp, House of Commons staff (GOV018), House of Commons staff (GOV059)
Departments. This could be a challenging change of culture for staff who have invested much of their loyalty in their departments. We discuss implementation in more detail in the next chapter.

174. In due course, as part of or following R&R, this structure would be well placed both organisationally and individually to evolve into the Commons components of a Parliamentary Services Department.

**Delegations**

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.

176. A proper system of delegations is fundamental to transparent decision-making and accountability. Decision makers at all levels need to understand the extent of their delegated authority, be clear on their accountability for their decisions and be confident of the support of those above them in the exercise of that authority.

177. 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.

**People**

178. The staff of the House are its most important resource. We have heard tributes to their professionalism and expertise from many quarters. Many of our witnesses, and in particular Members, told us that the House employs capable and talented staff with a wide range of skills. They noted that the House is not the only place that employs people for life: long service and experience can often be positive.

179. We discussed earlier the range of development opportunities available to staff. We have heard from many staff how important it is to them that the most senior posts should not be accessible only to staff who have entered the service by a particular route or into a particular department or directorate. It is equally important that the House should make every effort to remove any barriers, or perceived barriers, in respect of diversity. 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. If this is balanced with a willingness to receive secondments into the House service, and we were pleased to hear that this is also an area of growth, the net costs will not be great. As Andrew Kennon told us, ‘It costs a bit of money, but not a lot.’

180. David Natzler told us that the Management Board was in the process of consulting on a strategy for the House service which would have ‘customer service’ at its heart. Our own inquiry has, we believe, opened up a valuable dialogue between Members and staff. It is clear that many Members would welcome and find useful more opportunities to engage with staff, as would staff with Members. We have made a number of recommendations which we hope will further encourage such developments. We welcome the Management Board’s decision to pilot the use of name badges by senior staff. A key theme of our report is the need to find more and better ways for staff and Members to get to know and understand each other.

Culture

181. Our recommendations for structural changes will need to be underpinned by cultural change. For some witnesses cultural change was the first priority. Bernard Jenkin told us:

> All the advice that we have seen—everything that we have learned—has shown that organisations tend to fail not because of structural reasons but because of reasons of culture, behaviour or attitude. The questions we need to ask to understand what is going wrong and why are therefore about those things. When we get to the end of those questions and understand why things are going wrong there may be some consequent changes to structure or governance.

182. We believe that the two need to go hand in hand. In the course of our recommendations relating to governance structures we have drawn attention to the cultural changes which will be needed to make them effective. Underpinning all these changes is a requirement to move to an environment in which clarity and openness, in terms of decision-making and accountability, are the key elements. This is a significant change, not least because it challenges some of the features and consequences of the House’s traditional collegiate and consensual approach. The promotion of a collegiate

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200 Q649
201 Q180
202 Q153 [Bernard Jenkin MP]
approach and consensual decision-making is not itself a bad thing, but the evidence is that it has too often translated into a lack of accountability and a tendency to pass the buck.

183. No system in which officials are encouraged to take responsibility and to be accountable for decisions within authorities delegated to them can work, if accountability becomes synonymous with blame. In our discussions with staff, we were told about some examples of disrespectful behaviour by a few Members. In the summer all parts of the House agreed to a new Respect policy covering both sides of the Member/staff relationship. We welcome this but policies alone do not solve cultural problems.
7 Implementation

184. If the present period of uncertainty is prolonged, it could be damaging to staff morale and the standard of services provided to Members and the public both in this Parliament and the new Parliament to be elected in 2015. We set out a timetable for the implementation of our package of proposals below. We consider it is realistic and practicable, but it will require support from across the House. It is of the greatest importance that these matters do not become issues of party politics or means for advancing other agendas. The Leader of the House, William Hague, emphasised the importance of achieving a broad consensus. Coming to this issue with different perspectives we have made achieving a consensus our priority. During our work Members have expressed a wide range of opinions but if the House as a whole is able to act consensually to support an agreed approach, there is every chance that at least the principal elements of this package could be in place for the new Parliament. The Leader of the House told us that: ‘if there are almost no objections anywhere in the House, things can be very easy to do.’

203 Q256

185. Our report, and our proposals, must be endorsed by the House. The Leader of the House told us:

Certainly I anticipate that we will be able to find time for a debate on the Committee’s findings. There is a great deal of interest in this in the House and the Committee was asked in the resolution of the House that appointed it to report by 12 January. It will be important to be able to debate that.

204 Q253

We have interpreted this as an undertaking to schedule a debate in government time, for which we are grateful. As the timetable set out below demonstrates, it is important that that debate is held soon after the House returns in January and is on a substantive motion, so that actions can follow directly from it. We set out a draft motion for the House’s consideration in Annex C.

Timetable

The current appointment process

186. 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.

**Transition and Timing**

187. 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:

   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;

   b) The Management Board continues in its current form until the Executive Committee can be formed;

   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;

   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.

**The House of Commons Commission**

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. Annex C contains instructions to Parliamentary Counsel for the drafting of this legislation.

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.

**Member committees**

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.
The new Clerk of the House and Head of Service appointment process

191. 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.

192. Longlisting for the post should be the responsibility of a Sifting Panel, against the pre-determined attributes in the Job Description and Person Specification. The composition of the Sifting Panel would be determined by the Commission. It should be chaired by an independent non-executive Chair (potentially someone with recent experience with the Civil Service Commission, or similar) and there would be four other Members of Parliament. The shortlisting and final interviews should be conducted by an Appointment Panel, chaired by the Speaker, and which would have three other Members of Parliament chosen by the Commission, and a non-executive member and would be advised by an external expert on parliamentary procedure. The independent Chair of the Sifting Panel should be an observer. It is expected that this process would start with an Executive Search Agency, which will be used to manage the recruitment and produce a list of candidates who meet the minimum requirements for the post.

193. We have heard arguments that the Prime Minister should not be the person who passes the name of the successful candidate to The Queen. Andrew McDonald argued:

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\text{The sovereign, of course, acts on advice and in this case, as in so many others, that advice is provided by the Prime Minister. This is wholly appropriate for most appointments but in this instance it is objectionable in principle. Why should the head of the executive have a role in the appointment of the most senior official (or officials) within the legislature? Surely the advice should come from the legislature itself.}\]^{205}

194. We have some sympathy with this view, in principle, but we have not been able in the time available to us, to give it the consideration it deserves. We therefore have not recommended any change, but it may be a matter which the House or an appropriate committee will wish to return to in future.

195. Some Members have advocated a pre-appointment hearing for the successful candidate for Clerk of the House. Sir George Young however pointed out that the analogy with public appointments made by Ministers did not comfortably apply to the Clerk of the

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205 Andrew McDonald (GOV048)
We believe that the process we have recommended which puts Members in the driving seat should provide the House with the required assurance of suitability.

If the House is given the opportunity to debate our report in January 2015, we believe that it would be possible to complete the recruitment process so that a recommendation could be passed to The Queen before the House is dissolved for the General Election.

We have considered whether it would be better to leave the present temporary arrangements in place into the new Parliament in order to allow Members of the new Parliament to conduct the appointment. We believe that would be the wrong course:

- The election of the backbench Members of the new Commission may not take place until several weeks after the start of the new Parliament, so the full Commission membership may not be available until late June or early July.

- The House service has already been leaderless for nearly six months, which is too long. We could not countenance another six month delay.

- The appointment of a Director General of the House of Commons must follow that of the Clerk, so there would be additional delay in recruiting to that post.

**The new Director General of the House of Commons appointment process**

The appointment of a Director General of the House of Commons should also proceed as soon as possible and before the dissolution of Parliament. The Clerk of the House does not need to be appointed before the process commences but will need to be in place for the interview process.

The Director General of the House of Commons recruitment should follow a similar sifting process as for the Clerk of the House, but the Appointment Panel, chaired by the Speaker, should include the Clerk of the House.

**An implementation team**

As a package, our recommendations represent a significant reform of the House’s governance structures. This report sets out the high level structural changes that need to take place but these alone will not deliver the full benefits of that reform. There are many other essential elements that must be taken forward by the Commission and the House Service. In particular by extending the responsibilities of the Commission and expanding its membership, our recommendations will increase its importance and visibility to Members. The House will need to take a more active interest in its work. One of the consequences of the reforms introduced by the Wright Committee is that there is no

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206 Q325

clear route by which House business reaches the floor of the House: it is not government business, and it is not backbench business. **We recommend that the Procedure Committee consider how best this gap might be filled to ensure that time on the floor can be allocated in a timely manner to appropriate House and Commission business.**

201. **If the House agrees to the proposals in this report, the Management Board working with Commission should swiftly establish an implementation team to work with them to deliver the detailed changes required. The implementation team should be staffed with a mix of skills and knowledge from across the House.**

202. Implementation is about more than structures. In our view, the crucial element in making change work is managing perceptions and ensuring role descriptions reflect the skills and personal attributes required. The implementation team should be supported by the current Office of the Chief Executive which our proposals are likely to change. The team should be given clear terms of reference by the Management Board which should include:

   a) The development of a structure below the Executive Committee under the direction of the Clerk of the House and Director General of the House of Commons, with a system of communicating responsibilities and authorities to staff and Members;

   b) To consider the appropriate levels of support for the new enhanced Commission. It is likely that the existing secretariat will need reinforcing;

   c) To develop the support mechanism required for the Clerk of the House and Director General of the House of Commons. We expect the Office of the Chief Executive to be formed into an Executive Committee Office. It will be for the implementation team to identify a suitable location and structure for this enhanced office. We are clear that the Director General of the House of Commons should have an office readily accessible to Members;

   d) To agree how the reporting lines of the Parliamentary Digital Service and Parliamentary Security Director should operate with the Executive Committee and to whom the heads of each area should report;

   e) To work with counterparts in the House of Lords on preparation for the review of shared services proposed by the Clerk of the Parliaments;

   f) To consider how the respective responsibilities of Members and officials for making and implementing policies can be set out more clearly and communicated more effectively;
g) To identify methods to improve communication and engagement between Members and staff;

h) To review the arrangements for the publication of Erskine May. The Committee believes that this important work, central to our constitution, should have an audience beyond parliamentary experts. Opening the publication to all in Parliament and beyond will demonstrate the determination of the House to make the workings of Parliament understood by a wider range of staff and the public.209

203. The schedule for the implementation team must be time-limited and swift. We expect progress to be monitored closely by the Commission and the Executive Committee. The Commission cannot report back to this Committee so it should report progress to the House regularly. 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.

204. We have actively encouraged the involvement of staff and Members in our work. It will be important that they are equally able to engage with the implementation process. Staff reported to us that they found the staff event helpful and feel it should be repeated in the future. Good communication will be key to ensuring effective governance. Members of the Finance and Administration Committees, House of Commons Commission and Executive Board should undertake to hold regular staff events and report on these in the annual report.

205. 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.

Costs

206. In the short term our proposals involve the creation of an additional senior position with associated private office costs. To some extent this is an inevitable consequence of splitting the Clerk/Chief Executive role. The combined role was widely perceived to be more than one job. Splitting it will improve the House’s capability to deliver the services Members, staff and the public expect. It will also give the Clerk of the House more time to devote to the very considerable parliamentary and constitutional challenges that lie ahead. In the context of the House’s total budget these are modest sums, but we recognise the force of the Leader of the House’s advice:

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209 Q400. For further information see David Natzler, House of Commons staff (GOV092) Annex A
The final principle I would advocate is not to increase the cost of the overall system. The House has done very well to achieve 17% savings, in no small measure due to the efforts of our last Clerk, and I do not think that the House or the public would want to see an additional new, expensive position created.  

207. The post of Director General of the House of Commons will, of course, be open to House staff as well as to external candidates. We would welcome internal candidates, and if one was successful an immediate reallocation of responsibilities might be possible. But we do not accept that the short term cost of an additional post with new and additional responsibilities should be a decisive factor in any consideration of our proposals; not least because with increased capability should come an increased focus on efficiency and value for money. We have already recommended that a reduction in senior posts be made (paragraph 171). The new leadership team should be set the target of making the changes cost neutral within one year of their implementation.
8 Conclusion

208. As we noted at the start of this report, we have focussed on the key high-level issues to agree a package of recommendations which we believe to be capable of attracting support from Members on all sides of the House, and which can therefore be implemented expeditiously to address the present difficulties. It should not be another 40 years before a committee of this House looks at these issues.
Conclusions and recommendations

In the longer term

1. 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. (Paragraph 128)

2. 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. (Paragraph 130)

3. The delivery authority for the Restoration and Renewal programme itself may be a model for the provision of services to both Houses following R&R and this should be considered as part of the review of shared services suggested by the Clerk of the Parliaments. Legislation might allow for the delivery authority’s continuation, subject to the agreement of both Houses, as a statutory body providing certain defined services to both Houses on the basis of a series of detailed Service Level Agreements. (Paragraph 134)

Action to be taken now

The Deputy Speakers

4. A modest first step towards the developing of a Speakership team might be a widening of the agenda of the daily conferences, perhaps initially just on Mondays which both starts the working week and is the day on which the House sits latest. (Paragraph 138)

House of Commons Commission

5. Our recommendations for reform of the Commission focus first on ensuring that its remit adequately covers those responsibilities which should properly fall to the senior governance body and second on giving it the capability to discharge those responsibilities. (Paragraph 139)

6. They are that:

   a) 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;

   b) its members should be:

      — 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. (Paragraph 140)

7. If the Commission is to take on the role of setting the strategic framework for the delivery of services and then providing strategic oversight of how they are delivered, it follows that its compass should include all matters relating to the House administration including those for which the Speaker has ex officio responsibility, such as his role as ‘householder’ and in respect of Freedom of Information policy. We recommend that the Speaker, as far as possible, consults the Commission in the exercise of these responsibilities and powers. (Paragraph 142)

8. We support the idea of portfolio responsibilities for the elected members of the Commission (Paragraph 143)

Finance and Services and Administration Committee

9. 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. (Paragraph 145)

Management Board

10. 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. (Paragraph 156)

11. 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. (Paragraph 157)

12. The priority must be to reduce layers of bureaucracy not increase them. (Paragraph 159)
13. We fully support the objective of securing a fully unified House service. (Paragraph 163)

The roles of Clerk and Chief Executive

14. We have therefore concluded that the Clerk should continue to be the Head of the House service (and thus formally the line manager of the Director General of the House of Commons). However, since delivery will be the responsibility of the Director of the House of Commons, s/he should chair the Executive Committee and take lead responsibility for its agenda. Membership of the Commission will also give him or her direct access to the Speaker and other Commission members. S/he should be a very visible presence to Members. We recommend that the Commission consider what arrangements might be made to enable the Director General of the House of Commons to be visibly present in his or her official capacity in the Chamber when business relating to his or her responsibilities is under consideration (Paragraph 166)

15. 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. (Paragraph 171)

Delegation

16. 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. (Paragraph 175)

17. 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. (Paragraph 177)

Staff development

18. 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. (Paragraph 179)
Implementation

19. 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. (Paragraph 186)

20. 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:
   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;
   b) The Management Board continues in its current form until the Executive Committee can be formed;
   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;
   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. (Paragraph 187)

21. 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. (Paragraph 188)

22. 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. (Paragraph 189)

23. 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. (Paragraph 190)

Appointment process

24. 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. (Paragraph 191)

25. Longlisting for the post should be the responsibility of a Sifting Panel, against the pre-determined attributes in the Job Description and Person Specification. The composition of the Sifting Panel would be determined by the Commission. It should be chaired by an independent non-executive Chair (potentially someone with recent experience with the Civil Service Commission, or similar) and there would be four other Members of Parliament. The shortlisting and final interviews should be conducted by an Appointment Panel, chaired by the Speaker, and which would have three other Members of Parliament chosen by the Commission, and a non-executive member and would be advised by an external expert on parliamentary procedure. The independent Chair of the Sifting Panel should be an observer. (Paragraph 192)

26. The appointment of a Director General of the House of Commons should also proceed as soon as possible and before the dissolution of Parliament. The Clerk of the House does not need to be appointed before the process commences but will need to be in place for the interview process. (Paragraph 198)

27. The Director General of the House of Commons recruitment should follow a similar sifting process as for the Clerk of the House, but the Appointment Panel, chaired by the Speaker, should include the Clerk of the House. (Paragraph 199)

Implementation team

28. If the House agrees to the proposals in this report, the Management Board working with Commission should swiftly establish an implementation team to work with them to deliver the detailed changes required. The implementation team should be staffed with a mix of skills and knowledge from across the House. (Paragraph 201)

29. We recommend that the Procedure Committee consider how best to ensure that time on the floor can be allocated in a timely manner to appropriate House and Commission business. (Paragraph 200)

30. 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. (Paragraph 203)

31. Members of the Finance and Administration Committees, House of Commons Commission and Executive Board should undertake to hold regular staff events and report on these in the annual report. (Paragraph 204)

32. 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. (Paragraph 205)
33. The new leadership team should be set the target of making the changes cost neutral within one year of their implementation. (Paragraph 207)
Annex A–Draft Job Descriptions

Clerk of the House

- Acts as chief adviser to the House of Commons on the procedure and practice of Parliament, including parliamentary privilege, and is protected in this role by Letters Patent.

- Provides strategic leadership to efforts to increase understanding of and access to parliamentary proceedings and activities.

- Provides strategic leadership of a unified House of Commons service.

- Is in particular responsible for:
  
i) developing a strategic framework for service delivery - jointly with the Director General of the House Commons - including shared services and preparations for Restoration and Renewal;

  ii) actively developing the skills, experience and expertise of staff, overseeing succession planning, and working towards a more mobile and flexible workforce;

  iii) promoting a more diverse workforce at all levels of the House service;

  iv) leading effective communication with staff.

- Acts as Accounting Officer and Corporate Officer, with ultimate responsibility for the use of resources in meeting the strategic objectives of the administration of the House.

- Acts as a member of the House of Commons Commission and the Executive Committee, which takes strategic and corporate decisions for the House administration within a framework set by the Commission.

- Leads effective stakeholder relations on parliamentary business, including with the Speaker and Deputy Speakers, the Commission, Members, the House of Lords and external contacts in the UK and overseas.

- Represents the House of Commons at national and international level and participates in Speakers’ Conferences and other international fora.

Director General of the House of Commons

- Holds overall responsibility for the effective operational delivery of the full range of services to meet the strategic objectives of the House of Commons, including its parliamentary and outward facing functions.
- Acts as a member of the House of Commons Commission and chairs its Executive Committee, which takes strategic and corporate decisions for the House administration within a framework set by the Commission.

- Is responsible for developing a strategic framework for service delivery—jointly with the Clerk of the House—and has responsibility for ensuring the effective allocation of resources and implementation of services as determined by the Commission, with the right of direct access to the Speaker and other Commission members as needed.

- Has overall direct responsibility for the effective use of resources and the regularity and propriety of public expenditure and provides assurance to both the Commission, and the Clerk of the House as Corporate Officer and Accounting Officer.

- Leads effective stakeholder relations on the delivery of services and liaises directly with the Speaker and Deputy Speakers, the Commission, Members, and the House of Lords, to ensure strong and effective lines of communication with them.

- Leads in developing the House’s capability to manage the preparations for Restoration and Renewal.
Annex B–Draft instructions on amendment of the 1978 Act

1. Counsel is invited to prepare a Bill to give effect to the recommendations of the Committee. It is suggested that this might usefully be done by means of a short Bill to make a number of amendments to the House of Commons (Administration) Act 1978 (‘the 1978 Act’).

2. The desired amendments concern the membership and functions of the House of Commons Commission. Subject to Counsel’s view, it is not thought that the recommendations relating to the Management Board require any change in the 1978 Act or elsewhere. Unlike the House of Commons Commission, the Management Board is not a creature of statute and it is thought that no change in the law is required before it may be renamed or its duties and responsibilities altered.

Membership of the House of Commons Commission

3. The first desired amendment concerns the membership of the Commission. The present membership of the Commission is determined by section 1(2) of the 1978 Act. No change is sought in respect of section 1(2)(a)(b) or (c). An amendment is sought to increase from three to four the number of other members of the House of Commons referred to in section 1(2)(d). The members, so referred to, are to consist one from each of the three largest parties represented in the House and one from the remaining membership, in each case elected for a Parliament by the whole House. In the event of any issue arising as to which are the largest parties in question, some provision along the lines of section 3A(7) Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 may be necessary. As under the existing section 1(2)(d) of the 1978 Act, none of the members referred to is to be a Minister of the Crown.

4. A further amendment is required in order to make provision for the appointment of two external members and the appointment of two additional members, who may be the Clerk of the House, any Clerk Assistant or members of staff in the House Departments. The two external members are to be selected for appointment on merit on the basis of fair and open competition (along the lines of s.10(2) Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010) and are to appointed by resolution of the House of Commons (a possible model being paragraph 1(e) of Schedule 3 to the Parliamentary Standards Act 2009). The appointment is to be for a fixed term not exceeding 4 years. The external member so appointed may be re-appointed, again by resolution of the House, provided the selection for appointment (or rather re-appointment) has been made on merit on the basis of fair and open competition.

5. The two additional members referred to in paragraph 4 above are likely to be the Clerk of the House and the Director General of the House of Commons but it is not thought necessary to provide for this on the face of the Bill, save to ensure that the description of
persons who may be appointed is wide enough to include them. Those members who already form part of the staff of the House Departments will (most probably) have been selected for appointment on the basis of fair and open competition. The intention is that they be appointed by the Commission, no resolution of the House being required.

**Functions of the House of Commons Commission**

6. The present functions of the House of Commons Commission are enumerated in sections 2 and 3 of the 1978 Act and relate, essentially, to employment (in the case of section 2) and to the laying of estimates of the expenses of House Departments and other expenses incurred for the service of the House of Commons (section 3). It is desired to provide for the additional function of setting the framework for the provision of services to Members, staff and the public but without calling into question the right of the House to control its own proceedings or procedures. It should therefore be a function of the Commission to set a framework containing strategic priorities and objectives for the provision of such services. A possible analogy is suggested by section 4 Crime and Courts Act 2013 under which the Secretary of State is required to determine strategic priorities for an agency, or section 21 Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 under which the Secretary of State is to set out a framework for fire and rescue services.

**Procedure of the House of Commons Commission**

7. Paragraph 4 of Schedule 1 to the 1978 Act provides for the Speaker to be chairman of the Commission. It is proposed that the Speaker should be entitled to propose to the Commission that another member take the chair, either in his or her absence or for a period of time or number of meetings, with the proviso that any such chairman should not be the member referred to in section 1(2)(b) (the Leader of the House of Commons) or section 1(2)(c) (the Shadow Leader) or either of the staff members of the House Departments. It is not thought that any legislative change is necessary to achieve this since the Commission is already empowered to determine its own procedure under paragraph 6(2). A consequential amendment may be necessary to paragraph 6(3) of Schedule 1, but so as to preserve the power of the Commission to appoint one of the Commissioners (not being the Leader, Shadow Leader or staff member) to act in the absence of the Chairman and to ensure that the Commission is empowered to appoint a Commissioner in circumstances other than the Speaker’s absence.

8. No other amendment to Schedule 1 to the 1978 Act is required.

**Further issues not requiring legislative amendment**

9. It is intended that members of the Commission should assume particular portfolio responsibilities but it is not thought that this level of detail is desirable on the face of the statute.
10. It is also proposed that the existing Management Board should be re-constituted as an Executive Committee. Its core membership would be the official members of the Commission plus the Director of Finance. The official members would be the Director General of the House of Commons and the Clerk of the House. But as noted above the Management Board is not a creature of statute. There is no intention that its successor should be.

11. No amendment to the Commission’s powers to reorganise House departments is proposed.

12. Currently the Members’ Estimate Committee (MEC) has the same membership as the Commission and generally meets at the same time. Indeed meetings can move between Commission and MEC business almost seamlessly. No change in this arrangement is proposed, but there may be a need to ensure that there are no consequences on the MEC of the above Commission changes.
Annex C–Draft Motion

That this House welcomes the report of the House of Commons Governance Committee; notes the priority it has given to agreeing a package of proposals which can both significantly improve the governance of the House and be capable of attracting support from Members on all sides of the House, in a timely manner and well before the House is dissolved; agrees to the recommendations in Chapters 6 and 7; and encourages the appropriate bodies in both Houses of Parliament to address the Committee’s remaining conclusions and recommendations.
Annex D–House Resources

2014-15

In 2014-15 the resource estimate for running the House (the buildings, staff and services) is £201.3 million, with an additional capital estimate of £43 million, mostly relating to the buildings occupied by the House. The resource cost of the House is £2 million below the target set by the Commission in 2010 to reduce the cost of the House by 17 per cent in real terms by 2014/15. The cost of employing Members and their staff, as well as paying the pensions of previous Members, are dealt with separately and not included here (Member costs are expected to be £207.5 million in 2014/15). The House of Commons administration is split into Departments. The chart below shows planned resource spend by Department. ‘Other’ includes the Office of the Chief Executive (£1.9m), the Speaker’s Office (£0.5m) and other central provisions and programmes.

House of Commons planned expenditure by Department 2014/15

[Diagram showing planned expenditure by Department]

Changes in the House Service over time

The cost of the House of Commons has fallen since 2010, along with the number of people employed by the House. Comparisons of expenditure over time can be difficult as the services the House provides have changed (normally providing more), and the introduction of resource accounting in 2000 means prior years are not directly comparable. The chart below shows the change in the expenditure of the House since 1990 (with capital spend excluded after 2000); the staff costs are also shown since 2000. In each of the years shown since 2000 the resource expenditure of the House is affected by large non-cash items, primarily around the valuation of the estate and pensions. In three cases the figure has been adjusted for these. The House’s savings programme started in 2010 and the outturn for that year includes the effect of initial savings. Recent reports of the Finance and Services Committee have shown the savings made by the House on a consistent basis.

The change in staff numbers tracks the growth of the House administration and the chart below tracks the change since 1990 (although in 1990 the figure excluded works and maintenance staff who were employed by the Government at the time).

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212 Three significant adjustments relating to pensions/property in 2005/06 (actual £321m), 2009/10 (£279m) and 2010/11 (£170m) have been removed from the data used. These are indicted by a * in the chart. The sources for these charts are the House of Commons Commission Annual Reports and Accounts.

213 See: http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/finance-and-services-committee/
Staff employed by the House of Commons

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<th>Year</th>
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<tr>
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<td>932*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999/00 (excludes works)</td>
<td>911*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1,058*</td>
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<td>1,829</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005/06</td>
<td>1,778</td>
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</table>

Source: House of Commons Commission Annual Reports and Accounts
Note: Includes agency staff where available: excluding staff employed by MPs
Annex E–Organogram of proposed House governance structures

Commission
Speaker / Leader & Shadow Leader of the House / Elected Commissioner x 4 / External Appointee x 2 / Clerk of the House / Director General of the House of Commons

Finance Committee
Elected Commissioner / Members x 10

Administration Committee
Elected Commissioner / Members x 10

Executive Committee
Clerk of the House / Director General of the House of Commons / Director of Finance / plus up to 3 others

Audit Committee
Shadow Leader of the House / Elected Commissioner x 2 / Member x 1 / External Appointee x 2

Prepare

Prepare

Deliver

Assure

House Service
Annex F–Organogram of existing House governance structure

*Joint Services with the House of Lords*
Formal Minutes

Tuesday 15 December 2014

Members present:

Mr Jack Straw, in the Chair

Mr David Heath
Sir Oliver Heald
Jesse Norman
Ian Paisley
Jacob Rees-Mogg
Valerie Vaz
Mr Dave Watts

Draft Report (House of Commons Governance), proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 208 read and agreed to.

Annexes and Summary agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Report of the Committee to the House.

Written evidence was ordered to be reported to the House to be published.

Ordered, That the Chair make the Report to the House.
Witnesses

The following witnesses gave evidence. Transcripts can be viewed on the Committee's inquiry page at www.parliament.uk/governance-committee.

**Tuesday 21 October 2014**

Lord Browne of Madingley, Government Lead Non-Executive Director, Sir Amyas Morse, Comptroller and Auditor General, and Rt Hon Peter Riddell, Director, Institute for Government

**Question number**

Q1-61

**Thursday 23 October 2014**

Rt Hon Sir Alan Beith MP, Chair, Liaison Committee, Rt Hon Sir Alan Haselhurst MP, Chair, Administration Committee, and Rt Hon John Thurso MP, Chair, Finance and Services Committee

Q62-99

**Tuesday 4 November 2014**

Dame Janet Gaymer DBE QC, external member and acting Chair, Barbara Scott, external member, and Alex Jablonowski, former external member, House of Commons Management Board

Rt Hon David Blunkett MP, Rt Hon Peter Hain MP, Rt Hon Margaret Hodge MP, and Mr Bernard Jenkin MP

Q100-179

**Thursday 6 November 2014**

David Natzler, Acting Clerk of the House, Myfanwy Barrett, Director of Finance, and Andrew Walker, Director General of Human Resources and Change

Q180-238

**Tuesday 11 November 2014**

Rt Hon William Hague MP, Leader of the House

Angela Eagle MP, Shadow Leader of the House

Sir Paul Beresford MP, Rt Hon Sir Menzies Campbell MP, Rt Hon Hazel Blears MP, and Nigel Mills MP

Q239-310

**Tuesday 18 November 2014**

Mr Frank Doran MP, Rt Hon Andrew Lansley MP, and Rt Hon Sir George Young MP

John Manzoni, Chief Executive of the Civil Service, and Michael Whitehouse, Chief Operating Officer, National Audit Office

Q311-371
Thursday 20 November 2014

Lawrence Ward, Serjeant at Arms, and Robin Fell, Principal Doorkeeper

Marianne Cwynarski, Head of Central Communications, Paul Evans, Clerk of the Journals, and Onagh Gay OBE, Senior Library Clerk

Ken Gall, President of the Trade Union Side, House of Commons, and Dave Penman, General Secretary, FDA

Tuesday 25 November 2014

David Beamish, Clerk of the Parliaments

The Rt Hon the Lord Laming CBE DL, and The Rt Hon the Baroness Royall of Blaisdon

Rt Hon Sir Alan Duncan MP, Mr Barry Sheerman MP, and Rt Hon Keith Vaz MP

Wednesday 26 November 2014

John Borley, Director General of Facilities

Sir David Higgins, Chair of HS2 and former Chief Executive of the Olympic Delivery Authority

Thursday 27 November 2014

Andrew McDonald, former Chief Executive, Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority

Steve O’Connor, Director of Technology, PICT, Tom O’Leary, Head of Public Engagement and Learning, Richard Tapner-Evans, Director of Catering, and Martin Trott, Head of Continuous Improvement in Parliament

Andrew Kennon, Clerk of Committees, David Vere, Director of People Development, and Dr Emma Crewe, Principal Investigator, Parliamentary Effectiveness Research Programme, Department of Anthropology and Sociology, SOAS, University of London

Tuesday 2 December 2014

Sir Malcolm Jack, Sir William McKay, and Sir Roger Sands

Rt Hon Margaret Beckett MP, Mr Andrew Tyrie MP

Wednesday 3 December 2014

Sir Robert Rogers
Thursday 4 December 2014

The Rt Hon the Lord Judge, former Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales

Sir Kevin Tebbit, and David Orr, external member of Restoration and Renewal Programme Board
Published written evidence

The following written evidence was received and can be viewed on the Committee’s inquiry web page at www.parliament.uk/governance-committee. INQ numbers are generated by the evidence processing system and so may not be complete.

1. Mark Addison (GOV0047)
2. Myfanwy Barrett, Director of Finance (GOV0042)
3. David Beamish, Clerk of the Parliaments (GOV0077) and (GOV0094)
4. Rt Hon Hazel Blears MP (GOV0023)
5. The Rt Hon. the Lord Blencathra (GOV0040)
6. Rt Hon David Blunkett MP (GOV0009)
7. Rt Hon David Blunkett MP, Rt Hon Peter Hain MP, and Rt Hon Margaret Hodge MP (GOV0087)
8. John Borley, Director General of Facilities (GOV0088)
9. Marc Bosc, Acting Clerk, Canadian House of Commons (GOV0085)
10. Paul Bowers, House of Commons Library (GOV0084)
11. Dame Rosemary Butler, Presiding Officer, National Assembly for Wales (GOV0068)
12. James Camp, Enquiry Executive, House of Commons Library (GOV0018)
13. Cass Business School, City University, London (GOV0071)
14. Claire Clancy, Clerk and Chief Executive, National Assembly for Wales (GOV0067)
15. Rob Clements (GOV0025)
16. The Lord Cormack (GOV0049)
17. Simon Cramp (GOV0079)
18. Dr Emma Crewe, University of London (GOV0030) and (GOV0089)
19. Peter Davis, Counsel for Domestic Legislation (GOV0050)
20. Departmental Services Directorate, Department of Information Services (GOV0062)
21. Rt Hon Frank Dobson MP (GOV0027)
22. Rt Hon Sir Alan Duncan MP (GOV0046)
23. Economic Policy and Statistics Section, House of Commons Library (GOV0053)
24. David Elder, Clerk of the House of Representatives, Parliament of Australia (GOV0064)
25. Paul Evans, Clerk of the Journals (GOV0031)
26. Michael Fabricant MP (GOV0002)
27. Robin Fell, Principal Doorkeeper (GOV0041)
28. Robert Fielo MP (GOV0054)
29. Oonagh Gay OBE, Senior Library Clerk (GOV0012)
30. Paul Grice, Clerk and Chief Executive, Scottish Parliament (GOV0076)
31. Dominic Grixti, IT Project Manager, Parliamentary ICT Department (GOV0017)
32. Rt Hon Peter Hain MP (GOV0007)
33. Mary Harris, Clerk of the House of Representatives, New Zealand Parliament (GOV0074)
34. Martin Horwood MP (GOV0003)
35. House of Commons Management Board (GOV0021)
36. Information Management Directorate, Department of Information Services (GOV0063)
Barbara Keeley MP (GOV0038)
Andrew Kennon, Clerk of Committees (GOV0039)
The Lord Kirkwood of Kirkhope (GOV0061)
Rt Hon Andrew Lansley MP (GOV0008)
Carsten U Larsen, General Secretary, Danish Parliament (GOV0066)
Liam Laurence Smyth, Clerk of the Journals (GOV0001)
Leader and Deputy Leader of the House of Commons (GOV0093)
Chris Leslie MP (GOV0045)
Dr Julian Lewis MP (GOV0058)
Sir Peter Luff MP (GOV0005)
Corinne Luquiens, Secretary General of the French National Assembly (GOV0091)
Andrew McDonald (GOV0048) and (GOV0073)
Sir William McKay, Sir Roger Sands, and Sir Malcolm Jack (GOV0010)
Mitchel McLaughlin, Principal Deputy Speaker, Northern Ireland Assembly (GOV0069)
Member of House of Commons staff (GOV0014)
Member of House of Commons staff (GOV0016)
Member of House of Commons staff (GOV0020)
Member of House of Commons staff (GOV0022)
Member of House of Commons staff (GOV0026)
Member of House of Commons staff (GOV0028)
Member of House of Commons staff (GOV0035)
Member of House of Commons staff (GOV0051)
Member of House of Commons staff (GOV0056)
Member of House of Commons staff (GOV0059)
Member of House of Commons staff (GOV0080)
The Rt Hon. the Lord Martin of Springburn (GOV0043) and (GOV0044)
Andrew Miller MP (GOV0004)
David Natzler, Acting Clerk of the House (GOV0081) and (GOV0092)
Parliamentary Workplace Equality Networks (GOV0082)
Public Administration Select Committee (GOV0024)
John Pullinger (GOV0075)
Trevor Reaney, Clerk to the Assembly and Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Assembly (GOV0078)
Research Directorate, Department for Information Services (GOV0070)
Dr Horst Risse, Secretary-General of the German Bundestag (GOV0072)
Sir Robert Rogers (GOV0086)
Eve Samson, House of Commons staff (GOV0065)
Mr Barry Sheerman MP (GOV0029)
Juliet Taylor (GOV00xx)
Rt Hon John Thurso MP (GOV0011)
Trade Union Side (GOV0055)
Mr Andrew Tyrie MP (GOV0057)
Julia Vanoli, Learning and Development Manager, House of Commons (GOV0015)
Rt Hon Keith Vaz MP (GOV0034)
80  Aileen Walker, Director of Public Engagement, and Lee Bridges, Director of Public Information (GOV0060)
81  Andrew Walker, Director General of Human Resources and Change (GOV0090)
82  Lawrence Ward, Serjeant at Arms (GOV0019)
83  Mr Tom Watson MP (GOV0052)
84  David Weir, former Clerk of the Administration Committee (GOV0036)
85  Barry K. Winetrobe (GOV0013)
86  David Winnick MP (GOV0006)
87  Gavin Wright, Forbes Solicitors (GOV0083)
88  Masibulele Xaso, Secretary to the National Assembly, South Africa (GOV0095)