INTRODUCTION

This document is compiled by the Table Office as a guide to events likely to take place in and around the Chamber on Tuesday 17 December and the following days.

Please note that the dates for swearing in will be appointed by the Speaker and that the dates given in this document are provisional, pending the election of the Speaker.

From the day after the State Opening, an Order of Business and Summary Agenda setting out each day's business in the Chamber will be published daily.

These and other House business papers can be obtained online, on the House Papers app or in hard copy from the Vote Office or the SuperHub.

For further information on proceedings in the Chamber please contact the Table Office, behind the Speaker's Chair, x3302/3303 or tableoffice@parliament.uk, between 10.00am and 6.00pm or the rise of the House, whichever is later, or visit the SuperHub in the Attlee Suite on the 1st Floor of Portcullis House, between 10.00am and 4.00pm.

MEETING OF THE HOUSE - TUESDAY 17 DECEMBER

The House will meet at 2.30pm. The ringing of division bells will indicate the start of the sitting.

The Member with longest continuous service who is not a Minister (the Father of the House) will take the Clerk's chair at the Table just before Black Rod comes to the House at about 2.40pm to summon Members to the House of Lords. The Father of the House will then walk to the Lords, accompanied by the Clerk and followed by frontbenchers from both sides and any other Members who wish to do so. In the House of Lords, a Royal Commission will be read directing Members to choose a Speaker.

ELECTION OF THE SPEAKER

The Members of the House return to the Commons Chamber where the Father of the House will resume the same place to preside over the election of a Speaker. If the former Speaker, Sir Lindsay Hoyle, indicates that he is willing to be chosen as Speaker, the Father of the House will call a Member to move a Motion that he take the Chair as Speaker.

If the Motion is agreed to by the House, Sir Lindsay Hoyle will take the Chair as Speaker-elect, and, after expressing thanks and calling some senior Members for brief congratulatory speeches, he will suspend the sitting for a short time.
The House will then go to the House of Lords to receive Royal Approbation of its choice of a Speaker, and, on returning, Members will begin to swear in: first the Speaker, then the Father of the House, members of the Cabinet and Shadow Cabinet, other privy counsellors and other Ministers, then other Members by length of service. The television screens (known as annunciators) throughout the Parliamentary estate will provide information on that sequence.

The timings for swearing-in will be confirmed after the election of the Speaker.

A guidance note for Members on the swearing-in process is available on the intranet, in the Table Office and from the SuperHub.

If the Motion that Sir Lindsay Hoyle take the Chair as Speaker is not agreed to, the Father of the House will adjourn the House until 2.30pm the following day, when an election of a Speaker by secret ballot will take place.

APPLICATIONS FOR END OF DAY ADJOURNMENT DEBATES

The deadline for applications for end-of-day adjournment debates for Thursday 19 December and Friday 20 December and for Monday 6 January to Monday 13 January is Tuesday 17 December at 6.00pm.

Application forms are available online and from the Table Office. Completed applications should be handed in to the Table Office.

The result of the ballot will be announced on the morning of Wednesday 18 December.

FOLLOWING DAYS

WEDNESDAY 18 DECEMBER

(a) If the Speaker is re-elected

The House is expected to meet at 11.30am to continue the swearing-in of Members. This is likely to be the best opportunity for new Members to take the oath or affirm. New Members should aim to swear in before the Queen’s Speech.

(b) If the Speaker is not re-elected

If the former Speaker has not been re-elected, the House will meet at 2.30pm and a secret ballot will take place to elect a new Speaker. Arrangements for Royal Approbation of the House’s choice of Speaker and for the dates and times of swearing in will then be made.

THURSDAY 19 DECEMBER

The State Opening of Parliament will take place on Thursday 19 December. The House will meet at 11.25am for the Queen’s Speech. Members may follow the Speaker and party leaders to hear the speech delivered in the Lords. Afterwards, the House is expected to meet again at 2.00pm for swearing in before the start of the Queen’s Speech debate at 2.30pm.

The debate takes place on a Motion formally thanking the Queen for her speech.
SUBSEQUENT SITTING DAYS

Information on subsequent sitting days will be provided in an updated edition of this note.

The debate on the Queen's Speech usually lasts for six sitting days. The Speaker usually announces at the start of the debate which subjects are to be debated on each day.

On the final day of the debate on the Queen's Speech, the House votes on the Motion, and there may be votes on amendments to the motion on the penultimate and final days.

A guidance note for Members on the Queen's Speech debate is available on the intranet, in the Table Office and from the SuperHub.

There will be no oral Questions on any sitting day before Christmas. The deadline for tabling oral Questions for the first three sitting days in January will be provided in an updated edition of this note.

OTHER MATTERS

Debates in Westminster Hall will commence after the conclusion of the debate on the Queen's speech.

Applications for debates in Westminster Hall should be made to the Table Office. The deadline for the first ballot for Westminster Hall debates will be published in the Announcements section of the Order Paper when the timings for the debate on the Queen's Speech have been confirmed.

Application forms, and further information about these debates (which are opportunities for backbenchers to raise certain matters with Ministers) are available on the intranet, in the Table Office and from the SuperHub.

The Private Members’ Bills ballot is expected to be held on Thursday 9 January, under arrangements to be made by the Speaker. Further details will be announced when timing have been confirmed.

Information on arrangements for the election of Deputy Speakers and the rota for Departments responding in Westminster Hall in the new Session, will be announced when timings have been confirmed.

Questions and Motions may be tabled from 10.00am on Thursday 19 December.