



## Meeting Minutes Sponsor Board

---

<b>Meeting date</b>	5 October 2020
<b>Meeting location</b>	Virtual Meeting
<b>Meeting time</b>	3.30pm – 6.30pm

---

### Members Present

Liz Peace, Chair
Lord Best
Lord Carter of Coles
Lord Deighton
Damian Hinds MP
Brigid Janssen
Marta Phillips
Baroness Scott of Needham Market
Tommy Sheppard MP
Mark Tami MP
Simon Thurley
Simon Wright

### Attendees

Attendees	Item
John Benger, Clerk of the House of Commons	All
Ed Ollard, Clerk of the Parliaments	All
Sarah Johnson, CEO Sponsor Body	All
Lucy Owen, Chief of Staff, Sponsor Body	All
Johanna Porter, Board Secretary, Sponsor Body	All
David Goldstone, CEO, Delivery Authority	All
Matt White, Programme Director, Delivery Authority	All
David Yass, Strategic Review Lead, Sponsor Body	4
Mike Brough, Programme & Assurance Director, Sponsor Body	6 & 7
James Young, Head of Programme, Risk & Assurance, Sponsor Body	6 & 7



**1. Welcome, agenda & declarations of interest**

1.1 The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting.

1.2 The Chair gave the Board an overview of her engagement activities since the last meeting. Their focus for the period had been on the conduct of the Strategic Review.

1.3 No apologies were received for the meeting.

1.4 No changes were tabled to the Board meeting agenda (SB/20/082).

1.5 There were no declarations of interest made relevant to the items on the agenda.

**2. Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising**

2.1 **DECISION:** The minutes of the previous meeting (SB/20/083) were APPROVED.

2.2 **DECISION:** The Board NOTED the progress made against the actions (SB/20/084). The Chair asked that correspondence relating to the actions be shared with the whole Board.

**3. Sponsor Body Progress Report**

(SB/20/085)

Period: August 2020

Official: Sarah Johnson, CEO, Sponsor Body

3.1 The Chief Executive Officer gave the Board an overview of the work of the Sponsor Body for the period.

3.2 The following points were raised and noted:

- 3.2.1 The Estimates Commission had now been formed. The Commission would approve the Programme's annual estimates before they were laid before the Houses. The Chair of the Sponsor Board had written to Dame Eleanor Laing MP to offer to meet prior to the Commission's first meeting. The Commission's first meeting was anticipated to be in November, and a briefing on the Programme would be provided.
- 3.2.2 The CEO invited the Board to join the Programme's World Mental Health Day virtual conference on Thursday 8 October. She said that the continuing period of uncertainty made it more important than ever to look after staff wellbeing.
- 3.2.3 Digital fit out was continuing at 7 Millbank to allow a very limited, and voluntary, return to office. It was anticipated that the office would be available from the end of October primarily for those whose home-working conditions were challenging. Staff would be reminded that access to the wider Parliamentary Estate would not be permitted as this was required for House staff and Chamber duties.
- 3.2.4 It was likely that Board meetings would continue to be virtual events for at least the next six months.
- 3.2.5 The House of Commons Public Accounts Committee (PAC) Report was noted, also that it had been positively received by the press. The Programme would respond to each of the recommendations laid out by the report. The new External Affairs Director understood the need for a strong narrative.
- 3.2.6 The Clerk of the House of Commons suggested that in recruiting for the Parliamentary Engagement role the Programme might wish to consider a seconded role from the House.



There was a good tradition of outward secondment from the Clerks of both Houses. The CEO said that the Programme was open to considering a secondment and noted that Parliamentary staff numbers on the Programme were low. She said that the Chief of Staff was looking at whether the Cabinet Office Model might be adopted. The Chair agreed and said that it would take a person who was not from the House a long time to get up to date.

- 3.2.7 The Chair of the Audit & Assurance Committee updated the Board on its 18 September meeting, noting that it had been a brisk meeting with much on the agenda. The Committee was content with the approach to internal audit but had challenged the cost of the audit. Work was ongoing to prioritise activity for the remaining period to March 2021. The CEO would be meeting with RSM Risk Assurance Services LLP on 6 October.
- 3.2.8 It was noted that minutes of the Audit and Assurance Committee would in future be circulated to the Board but in this instance, there had been insufficient time between the two meetings.

3.3 **DECISION:** The Board NOTED the Sponsor Board Progress Report for the period of September 2020

## 4. Strategic Review

Officials: Sarah Johnson, CEO, Sponsor Body

David Yass, Strategic Review Lead, Sponsor Body

- 4.1 The Chief Executive Officer updated the Board on the progress of the Strategic Review.
- 4.2 The following points were raised and noted:
- 4.2.1 The team were planning a joint workshop with the Sponsor and Delivery Authority Boards for the beginning of November.
- 4.2.2 The Sponsor Board would be asked to consider the draft recommendations in mid-November. The report would then be discussed with both Houses in December and published once it had been considered by Parliamentary authorities.
- 4.2.3 Following initial feedback from stakeholders, including both Houses of Parliament and externally, an independent engineering company had been commissioned to complete a further piece of technical work specifically focussing on the replacement and renewal of the mechanical and electrical building services. The outputs from this exercise would form part of the package of evidence that would shape the Strategic Review recommendations.
- 4.2.4 The Chair reported that Mr Speaker and the Leader of the House of Commons had both agreed the Programme should take the time that it needed to complete the Strategic Review.
- 4.2.5 A question was asked whether the Strategic Review would revisit the detail of the resolutions made in 2018 including the need for a full or partial decant of the Palace. The CEO said that the Terms of Reference for the review focussed on whether anything 'had changed significantly' since these decisions had been taken; therefore, it was possible that the resolutions may need revisiting, or that there may be a desire for further discussion in the Houses. Whilst the Act did not require for the Palace to be fully decanted it did say that members should be returned to the Houses as soon as possible following any period of decant. The joint Boards workshop would explore what a phased or partial decant might look like in further detail.
- 4.2.6 Concern was expressed that new MPs had not had the opportunity to express their thoughts on the Programme during the recent debate in the House of Commons. Anecdotal evidence indicated that increasingly conflicted views about the state of the



mechanical and electrical building services in the Palace were emerging. It was suggested that there was mounting pressure for a partial decant. The Chief of Staff said that work was ongoing to create virtual basement tours for which there had been significant interest from Members.

- 4.2.7 The CEOs of the Sponsor Body and Delivery Authority confirmed they were taking an open-minded approach to whether work could be carried out with Members in situ. Key to any recommendations from the Review, and further work that would be carried out as part of the Outline Business Case, would be understanding the risks involved with any particular course of action and whether those risks could be acceptedly managed.
- 4.2.8 The CEO for the Delivery Authority said that there would be health, safety & wellbeing, and security risks, as well as the impact of the disruption, to be considered in keeping Parliament operational whilst the building services were replaced. They made it clear that safety was paramount in the Programme's operations, and that it would be difficult to proceed if there were uncertainties surrounding safety.
- 4.2.9 The Chair said that all options would be presented in a factual way, with the consequence of each clearly laid out.

## 5. Delivery Authority Programme Report

(SB/20/086)

Period: August 2020

Officials: David Goldstone, CEO, Delivery Authority

Matt White, Programme Director, Delivery Authority

- 5.1 The Chief Executive Officer for the Delivery Authority updated the Board on progress for the period. They noted that good progress had been made against two of the top three risks of user requirements, and master planning; clarity of decision making remained critical as the programme progressed toward the outline business case (OBC).
- 5.2 The Programme Director said that there had been no health, safety or wellbeing incidents recorded for the period.
- 5.3 The following points were raised and noted:
  - 5.3.1 The strategic risks for the period had not changed.
  - 5.3.2 The number of people on the ground at both the QEII and Palace was increasing slowly. Survey work had restarted, and it was anticipated that intrusive surveys would begin in January 2021.
  - 5.3.3 Following the House of Commons Commission recent announcement to move MPs into Richmond House for a period of 3 years, the Programme had commenced scenario planning both to understand potential impacts and to start to identify mitigations.
  - 5.3.4 The master-planning timetable remained concerning due to the uncertainties surrounding schedules of interdependent projects in particular NEP and external realm works. The CEO for the Sponsor Body said that she was due to have a detailed briefing from the master-planning group and would have official representation on the master-planning forum.
  - 5.3.5 Changes to the staffing within BDP, the Programme's design consultant, were being made to address the lack of adequate building services capability. Staff from BDP's House of Lords Decant team were being re-tasked to provide support. Hoare Lea, an engineering consultancy firm, specialising in building services and working for BDP, would have a more visible role on the Programme.



5.3.6 Concern was expressed that despite being more than halfway through the year less than half of the year end forecast expenditure had been spent. The Board were told that the DA were aware of this and that a mid-year review was being completed to look at Programme spending. It was anticipated that there would be an underspend and that this could be attributed to the delays to survey work (due to Covid-19 working restrictions), slower than anticipated build-up of design work and the reallocation of resource to support the Strategic Review.

5.4 The Board NOTED the contents of the R&R Programme Progress Report for August 2020.

6. R&R Programme 3<sup>rd</sup> Line Assurance Reviews (SB/20/087)

Official: James Young, Head of Programme, Risk and Assurance

6.1 The Head of Programme, Risk and Assurance said that the report had been agreed by the Audit and Assurance Committee at its meeting on 18 September 2020.

6.2 He explained that the paper built upon the assurance approach previously agreed by the Board at its June 2020 (SB/20/048) meeting. A series of reviews would be completed at key milestones to provide assurance to the executive, Board and stakeholders. These reviews would build on earlier work this year such as the Critical Friend Review, NAO report and the Lessons Learnt conducted with the Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA). The next 3<sup>rd</sup> line review, early next year, would look at organisational capability and capacity and would be a good time to reflect on the outcomes of the Strategic Review and to set the Programme up for success in reaching the OBC.

6.3 The following points were raised and noted:

6.3.1 The future review timetable was indicative, and lines of enquiry would be shaped closer to the time. The assurance would be planned to avoid duplication and would support the work of the NAO and RSM, the Programme's internal auditors. It was noted that the NAO work would be to give assurance to Parliament and not the Programme.

6.3.2 It was noted that the review of the OBC was scheduled for August 2021. This review would need to happen at a time that the Programme would still be able to integrate recommendations from the review into the OBC, but also at a point that the OBC was well enough developed for it to be reviewed.

6.4 **DECISION:** The Board NOTED this 3rd Line Assurance Review plan.

7. R&R Risk & Contingency Strategies (SB/20/088)

Official: James Young, Head of Programme, Risk and Assurance

7.1 The Head of Programme, Risk and Assurance said that the report had been approved by the Audit and Assurance Committee at its meeting on 18 September 2020.

7.2 He explained that Board had previously agreed the Sponsor's approach to risk at its June 2020 (SB/20/048) meeting. These three strategies had been developed in collaboration with the Delivery Authority and illustrated the robust risk mitigation and contingency funding model in place for the Programme.

7.3 The following points were raised and noted:



- 7.3.1 The strategies covered the period to OBC and would need to be refreshed in preparation for the delivery phase of the Programme.
- 7.3.2 The principle set out in the contingency paper was that funding would be held by both the Sponsor Body and the Delivery Authority reflecting the level and types of risk that they would manage. The amount of contingency funding held at each level would be agreed as part of the Project and Programme OBCs.
- 7.3.3 It was expected that the Programme and Project level risks, held by the Delivery Authority, would be quantified by OBC and any risks that remained unquantifiable at this point would be owned by the Sponsor Body.
- 7.3.4 It was anticipated that, in principle, any contingency funding not spent by the Programme could be reinvested. This would, however, be subject to further consideration as the Programme's delivery proposal was developed.

7.4 **DECISION:** The Board NOTED the Contingency Funding Model.

## 8. Comments, Announcements and Other Business

8.1 The Board noted the future agenda (SB/20/089).

8.2 There were no further comments or announcements.

8.3 The date of the next meeting would be a joint meeting with the Delivery Authority Board in the week commencing the 9 November 2020 to discuss the Strategic Review.

8.4 The Chair brought the meeting to a close at 5.21pm.

**Signed By:**

---

**Date:** 15 October 2020

---