



Minutes Sponsor Board

Meeting date	07 March 2022
Meeting location	Archbishops Room, Millbank House
Meeting time	3.30pm – 6.30pm

Attendees

Members Present
Liz Peace, Chair
Kirsty Blackman MP
Lord Best
Lord Carter of Coles
Lord Deighton
Mark Tami MP
Marta Phillips
Paul Lewis
Robin Millar
Simon Thurley
Simon Wright
Sir Edward Leigh MP

Attendees	Item
Andy Helliwell, Chief Operating Officer, House of Lords	All
Claire Maugham, Communications Director, Sponsor Body	All
Johanna Porter, Board Secretary, Sponsor Body	All
John Benger, Clerk of the House of Commons	All
Karen Watling, Executive Assistant, Sponsor Body	All
Sarah Johnson, CEO, Sponsor Body	All
David Goldstone, CEO, Delivery Authority	4 & 5
Matt White, Programme Director, Delivery Authority	4 & 5
Gurdip Juty, Finance & Corporate Services Director, Sponsor Body	5

1. Welcome, agenda and declarations of interest

1.1 The Chair opened the meeting noting a quorum was present.

1.2 Baroness Doocey had sent her apologies. Lord Deighton, Robin Millar MP, and the Communications Director joined the meeting virtually. The Clerk of the House of Commons joined the meeting in person at 3.50pm and Mark Tami MP joined the meeting in person at 4.55pm. The House of Lords Chief Operating Officer attended the meeting in place of the Clerk of the Parliaments.

1.3 The Board NOTED the meeting agenda (SB/22/027). The Chair requested that the Delivery Authority's (DA) Programme Report and Executive Summary be discussed in tandem with the Main Estimate paper. She briefed the Board on recent discussions between the Sponsor Body and the DA before the DA's CEO and Programme Director were invited into the meeting. The Finance & Corporate Services Director was then asked to update the Board on the Sponsor Body's view of the Main Estimate.



1.4 The Board NOTED the Register of Interests (SB/22/028). The Register had been updated to include Robin Millar MP's interests. Simon Thurley informed the Chair that he had been asked to Chair the House of Commons Conservation Panel by Mr Speaker. The Panel would meet monthly to provide conservation advice about ongoing works in the House of Commons. It was agreed that this work did not conflict with the day's agenda.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising

2.1 **DECISION:** The Board APPROVED the minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2022 (SB/22/029). The minutes would be signed electronically on the Chair's behalf.

2.2 There were no outstanding actions on the Action log (SB/22/030).

3. Sponsor Body Progress Report

(SB/22/031)

Period: February 2022

Official: Sarah Johnson, CEO, Sponsor Body

The Chief Executive highlighted the key points from the Sponsor Body Progress Report for February 2022 noting that she had not received a response to her letter from either Mr Speaker or the Lord Speaker. The House of Lords COO reported that both House Clerks had written to the CEO with some 'guidance' about activities to be undertaken over the coming weeks pending a joint meeting of both Commissions.

The CEO drew members' attention to the Task Brief in their pack, in particular the details of Task 6 which would be included in the paper going to the House Commissions ahead of their joint meeting on 17 March.

She reported that the timeline for transition was long, and the Programme would continue to support and update staff throughout the process; there was however concern about staff retention.

She confirmed that she had spoken to the NAO about the Programme's governance and assurance arrangements; they were content with the proceedings for the short-term. It would be important for the Programme to have its Main Estimate for 2022/23 agreed by the Commissions.

DECISION: The Board NOTED the Sponsor Body Report for February 2022.

4. Chair's Brief

The Chair briefed the Board on her discussions with the Chair of the Delivery Authority's (DA) Board regarding the DA's estimated running costs for 2022/23.

Members were content with the funding figures for Task Brief 005, including the survey work, but wanted to see the overall spend for the DA brought down further. Some members expressed concern about the Data & Digital funding; the business-as-usual running costs remained high for what would become a much smaller organisation. It was noted however that a robust digital infrastructure needed to be in place to support future programme work and existing corporate functions; that there remained a significant and growing threat to cyber security; and the cost of the staff to deliver the work was high.



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It was noted the Sponsor Body and the DA had only had a short amount of time to put the Main Estimate together following the recent decisions by the Houses to review programme scope and governance. Task Brief 005 was a short-term task brief that could, if necessary, be updated following the Joint Commission meeting on 17 March. The Main Estimate would make it clear therefore that a Supplementary Estimate would be required once the Programme had more clarity as to Parliament's wishes.

Sir Edward Leigh MP said that he would speak to the Leader of the House about the potential long timetable for formal decision-making.

5. DA Programme Executive Summary

Period: January 2022

(SB/22/032)

Officials: David Goldstone, CEO, Delivery Authority

Matt White, Programme Director, Delivery Authority

DECISION: The Board NOTED the DA Programme Report Executive Summary & Programme Report for January 2022.

6. Main Estimate 2022/23

(SB/22/033)

Officials: David Goldstone, CEO, Delivery Authority

Matt White, Programme Director, Delivery Authority

Gurdip Juty, Finance & Corporate Services Director

The CEO of the Delivery Authority (DA) reported that the DA had very quickly reviewed their activities and funding figures and aligned them with the work described in the new Task Brief 005. The review had been aggressive in terms of a "top down" review of what activity to stop, pause or continue, and the revised estimate was 36% lower than that agreed by the DA's Board in December 2021. The funding would enable the DA to keep its business running and had kept in mind the need to be ready to respond to future demands – albeit there was a clear risk arising from the reduction in resource of lost technical capacity and expertise in areas such as design and engineering, which would inevitably take time to remobilise when greater clarity on future direction was available. The longer the time until that clarity was available the greater the impact and risk.

The Programme Director said that future delivery strategies would be collaborative and iterative in their development and incorporate a phased delivery programme that would align with the principles of the Parliamentary Estate Masterplan.

The current 'New Approach to Works' workstream would include an iterative approach to scope reassessment including how works would be delivered and cost, including areas such as a revised approach to reservicing and replacement works, benefits assessment, and benchmarking. The DA would also be considering options for early works, pilot projects, advanced works, main works, and follow-on works packages. The DA would deliver a formal response to Task Brief 005 by 18 March.

The funding allocated to this work included costs for programme management, assurance, health & safety, and design work. There was also an allowance for costs that may potentially arise from the



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rapid and significant changes to contracts already in place, but this was subject to commercial negotiation.

The DA would require clarity from the Houses as to the critical scope elements, such as resilience requirements, fire protection and accessibility. It was noted that, whilst there did not appear to be the appetite for a full decant, it could not be guaranteed that vacant possession of parts of the Palace would not be required in the future given the complexity of the work required.

It was acknowledged that Data & Digital remained a significant cost for the Programme, but that the allocated funding had been reduced by approximately 40% since December. Investment was planned to deliver savings from future operations, for enhanced cyber security and storage capacity needed to store survey data. The Programme's Information Management requirements were complex and demanding.

The Finance & Corporate Services Director informed the Board that the Sponsor Body's costs had been reduced by 53%. The funding remaining would allow for staffing costs and assurance work as needed.

The CEO of the Sponsor Body confirmed that the estimate could be transferred to the new organisation at the point that the Sponsor Body was dissolved. She was also taking legal advice as to the point at which she would no longer be responsible for the funds allocated.

In further discussion, it was agreed that the Sponsor Board needed to continue to monitor DA activities and associated spend carefully in order to assure value for money. Consequently the DA was asked to brief the next Board meeting on their emerging thinking regarding alternative routes for achieving what the Commissions wanted for the programme, particularly the sort of projects that they might propose to start quickly.

DECISION The Board APPROVED the Estimate 2022/23 for onward submission to the House Commissions and Estimates Commission.

The Board requested a briefing at its next meeting on emerging DA proposals for the programme.

7. Approach to Sponsor Transition Work

(SB/22/034)

Official: Sarah Johnson, CEO, Sponsor Body

The CEO of the Sponsor Body introduced the paper. She thanked the Head of Performance of the Sponsor Body for his work in producing the paper and acknowledged that the whole of the Sponsor Body had been working hard in difficult circumstances.

DECISION The Board NOTED the planned approach to the Sponsor transition work following the decisions of the two House Commissions to re-assess the approach to the works and governance arrangements.



8. Comments, announcements, and other business

8.1 Future Business

- The output from the Joint Commission meeting scheduled for 17 March would be sent via correspondence.
- The Audit & Assurance Committee would review the Annual Report & Accounts draft narrative before it came to the Board for comment.
- The Programme Director would be asked to update the Board on the New Approach to Works at a future meeting.

8.2 There was no other business.

8.3 The date of the next meeting would be Tuesday 3 May. It was agreed to cancel the meeting scheduled for Monday 4 April as it fell within Parliamentary Recess.

8.4 The Chair brought the meeting to a close at 5.55pm.

9. Papers enclosed for information

9.1 DA Programme Report: January 2022

(SB/22/035)

9.2 Short Term R&R Programme Task Brief

(SB/22/036)

9.3 Communications Evaluation: January 2022

(SB/22/037)

Signed by:

Date: 3 May 2022
