



Meeting Minutes Sponsor Board

SB/21/010

Meeting date	04 January 2021
Meeting location	Virtual Meeting
Meeting time	3.30pm – 6.30pm

Members Present

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

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
Claire Maugham, Communications Director, Sponsor Body	1 - 7
David Goldstone, CEO, Delivery Authority	1 - 7
Johanna Porter, Board Secretary, Sponsor Body	1 - 7
Karen Watling, Executive Assistant, Sponsor Body	1 - 7
Lucy Owen, Chief of Staff, Sponsor Body	1 - 7
Matt White, Programme Director, Delivery Authority	1 - 7
Sam Daly, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Lead, Delivery Authority	5



Private Session

Official: Liz Peace, Chair, Sponsor Body

No minutes were recorded for this item.

1. Welcome, Agenda and 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. She had attended:

1.2.1 An introductory meeting with the members of the Estimates Commission on 8 December 2020.

1.2.2 The regular meeting with the Director General of the House of Commons, and the Managing Director of In-House Services & Estates on 9 December 2020. These meetings were proving to be very productive in establishing a close working relationship.

1.2.3 The Programme All-Hands on 9 December 2020.

1.3 Gurdip Juty, Finance & Corporate Services Director, Sponsor Body sent his apologies.

1.4 The Board meeting agenda (SB/21/001) had been revised from its initial circulation. The Chair had requested that the Board hold a closed session with Sarah Johnson, Sponsor Body CEO to discuss the House of Commons Commission's response to the Strategic Review.

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 The DA's CEO requested minor amendment to the wording of paragraph 5.2.3 of the minutes of the previous meeting.

2.2 **DECISION:** The Board APPROVED the minutes of the previous meeting (SB/21/002).

2.3 The DA's CEO requested that ownership for items 045 and 046 be transferred to him and confirmed they would be brought to the Board as a single item.

2.4 **DECISION:** The Board NOTED the progress made against the action log (SB/21/003).

3. Sponsor Body Progress Report

(SB/21/004)

Period: December 2021

Official: Sarah Johnson, CEO, Sponsor Body

3.1 The CEO updated the Board on the work of the Sponsor Body to the end of December 2020.

3.2 The following points were raised and noted:



- 3.2.1 The Programme would continue to prioritise the wellbeing of all staff during the evolving pandemic working conditions.
- 3.2.2 Work was ongoing to ensure that the right protocols were in place to enable effective, but controlled, sharing of information between the Programme and the two Houses.
- 3.2.3 There had been a Joint Sponsor Body and Delivery Authority Risk, Audit & Assurance Committee meeting on 17 December 2020. The minutes from this meeting would come to the Sponsor Board's February meeting. The Chair of the Sponsor's Audit & Assurance Committee informed the Board that the NAO had presented their schedule of work to year end. She noted that the Programme's internal audit figures had appeared high but that these included works to support the DA's audit function. The NAO were aware of this work.

3.3 **DECISION:** The Board NOTED the Sponsor Body Progress Report for December 2020.

4. DA Programme Report

(SB/21/005)

Period: November 2020

Officials: David Goldstone, CEO, Delivery Authority

Matt White, Programme Director, Delivery Authority

4.1 The CEO for the DA provided the Board with a high-level summary of key activities for the DA since the last meeting:

- 4.1.1 The Team were working with the Sponsor Body on an 18/24-month timetable for the development of the business case. This timetable would include a series of down selection points.
- 4.1.2 A workshop was due to take place to consider in greater depth the practicalities of co-location of the Houses during any periods of decant required.
- 4.1.3 Detailed design work had commenced and would be informed further by the intrusive survey work due to take place later in the year.
- 4.1.4 The DA's senior leadership team continued to grow, and its development remained a priority.

4.2 The Programme Director updated the Board on the work of the Delivery Authority for November 2020.

4.3 The following points were raised and noted:

- 4.3.1 Heritage work, including the cataloguing of items, was behind schedule. COVID-19 had impacted access to the Palace and therefore the timetable. The work on establishing requirements for a storage facility had also been paused whilst roles and responsibilities were worked out with Parliamentary colleagues. The DA



expected to receive a progress update against a revised operating model in the coming weeks. This model would provide an holistic view as to how the collections should be managed.

- 4.3.2 The Board expressed concern over the delays to the heritage work. It was anticipated that a large off-site storage and conservation facility would be required whichever business case and decant options were agreed in the future. It was noted that the DA expected the timeframes shouldn't last beyond the end of the current financial year. It was agreed that the Programme should continue to engage with the Parliamentary teams to understand how the Task Brief (agreed at Sponsor Board meeting in June 2020) might change.

4.4 **DECISION:** The Board NOTED the DA Programme Report (Executive Summary) for November 2020.

5. Equality Diversity & Inclusion Survey Results

(SB/21/006)

Official: Sam Daly, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Lead, Delivery Authority

5.1 The EDI Lead introduced herself and explained that whilst her role sat within the DA that she worked across the Programme to ensure that there was a consistent approach to EDI. She then updated the Board on the outcome of the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion survey results.

5.2 The following points were raised and noted:

- 5.2.1 The response rate at 45% was good for a first survey; it was anticipated that the take up rate would be higher in the future.
- 5.2.2 Work was ongoing to look at how work experience schemes and apprenticeships might boost the number of 16-24 year olds within the Programme.
- 5.2.3 The Programme had signed up to the Black Talent Charter.
- 5.2.4 Gender and ethnic representation dropped with seniority in the Programme. Work would be done to look at how these figures could be improved.
- 5.2.5 Many respondents said they 'preferred not to say' regarding sexual orientation. This type of response indicated that the Programme still had work to do in this area.
- 5.2.6 There were a high number of respondents that held University Degrees. This would be challenged in the recruitment process, particularly at more junior levels.
- 5.2.7 Each of the protected characteristics surveyed would be assigned a champion within one of the Executive Teams.
- 5.2.8 It was said that the figures reported against religion and belief were lower than anticipated and would be monitored for unconscious bias. However, one Board member said that they were not concerned as it reflected similar findings of the Church Commission.



5.2.9 It was confirmed that Programme staff were able to join existing Parliamentary networks. Staff numbers were currently too low to establish dedicated Programme networks. The Board said that strong networks were crucial in creating safe spaces for staff and provided a valuable mentoring function.

5.2.10 The Board asked to be included in any future surveys.

5.3 **DECISION:** The Board NOTED the results of the EDI Survey.

6. Phase 1 Expenditure Limit (P1EL)

(SB/21/007)

Officials: Sarah Johnson, CEO, Sponsor Body

David Goldstone, CEO, Delivery Authority

6.1 The Sponsor Body CEO briefed the Board on the P1EL. She reminded the Board that it had previously received a presentation on the P1EL at its December meeting.

6.2 The following points were raised and noted:

6.2.1 The new business case option was still being scoped and costed and was not included in the proposals. The Board was asked to approve the P1EL as presented; a separate sub-group including the Sponsor Board Chair and Marta Phillips would be asked to approve the additional expenditure on the Board's behalf in January before the proposals were taken to the House Commissions. There was not time to bring the paper back to the Board before the Commission meetings.

6.2.2 A benchmarking exercise across major programmes and heritage projects had been commissioned, and work with the Cross Whitehall Estimates Group would provide the Programme with a range of resources to draw upon in its benchmarking work.

6.2.3 The cost estimate variation for the additional business case work would be completed in January, but the detailed work itself would take a further six to nine months to develop.

6.2.4 The P1EL information would become a matter of public record once it had been laid before Parliament in April 2021. It was proposed that a more accessible version would be made available on the Programme website at the same time.

6.2.5 It was clarified that at the end of Phase 1 the Programme would provide details of the preferred option for R&R to the Houses. This would include drawings. If agreed by the Houses this option would be delivered as part of Phase 2 of the Programme.

6.2.6 It was confirmed that 'The Construction Playbook: Government Guidance on sourcing and contracting public works projects and programmes' and the NAO's 'Framework to review programmes' had been referenced as helpful benchmarks against which to compare Programme approach and processes.

6.2.7 The Board discussed the financial position of the Programme. It was said that all costs had been reviewed and challenged extensively. It was not anticipated that



there was any capacity to push costs down further without either extending the duration or reducing the scope of the Programme.

6.3 **DECISION:** The Board APPROVED the Phase 1 Expenditure Limit request for the remaining period from April 2021 to March 2023 – subject to the addition of the further costs for the new option - and agreed that the updated numbers, once finalised, should be submitted for approval to the House Commissions.

7. Comments, Announcements and Other Business

7.1 The Chair noted that an announcement regarding a potential tighter lockdown was due that evening, and that the Programme remained focussed on the well-being of all its staff.

7.2 The Board sent its congratulations to Hunada Nours, Independent Board Committee Member, on receipt of her OBE in the Queen's New Year Honours.

7.3 It was noted that further work was required to highlight the differences between R&R and the ongoing work on the Parliamentary Estate.

7.4 The date of the next meeting would be Monday 8 February 2021.

7.5 The meeting was brought to a close at 17.40pm.

8. Papers Enclosed for Information

8.1 Letter from Mr Speaker (dated 30 December) to Sarah Johnson, CEO regarding the Commission's discussion of the Strategic Review on 11 December 2020. (SB/21/008)

Signed By:

Date: 4 January 2021
