



Minutes Sponsor Board

SB/21/054

Meeting date	4 May 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
Ian Levy MP
Kirsty Blackman MP
Lord Best
Lord Carter of Coles
Lord Deighton
Marta Phillips
Simon Thurley
Simon Wright

Attendees

	Item
John Benger, Clerk of the House of Commons	All
Sarah Johnson, CEO, Sponsor Body	All
Simon Burton, Clerk Assistant, House of Lords	All
Claire Maugham, Communications Director, Sponsor Body	1 - 10
Clementine Brown, Head of Parliamentary Engagement, Sponsor Body	6
David Goldstone, CEO, Delivery Authority	1 - 10
James Young, Head of Programme, Risk & Assurance, Sponsor Body	5
Johanna Porter, Board Secretary, Sponsor Body	1 - 10
John Gullick, Head of Stakeholder Engagement & Consents, Delivery Authority	7
John Thursfield, Engagement Strategy Manager, Sponsor Body	6
Karen Watling, Programme Director Executive Assistant	1 - 10
Lucy Owen, Chief of Staff, Sponsor Body	1 - 10
Marek Kubala, Head of Governance & Parliamentary Procedure	1 - 10
Matt White, Programme Director, Delivery Authority	1 - 10
Mike Brough, Programme Assurance Director, Sponsor Body	5

Private session

Official: Liz Peace, Chair, Sponsor Board

No minutes were recorded for this item.



1. Welcome, agenda and declarations of interest

1.1 The Chair opened the meeting. A quorum was present. The Chair welcomed Kirsty Blackman MP to her first meeting as a member of the Sponsor Board.

1.2 Mark Tami MP sent his apologies.

1.3 The Board NOTED the meeting agenda (SB/21/041). No changes were proposed.

1.4 There were no further declarations of interest made relevant to the items on the agenda, except where previously disclosed.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising

2.1 **DECISION:** The Board APPROVED the minutes of the meeting held on 12 April (SB/21/042) as an accurate record of the meeting. The minutes would be signed electronically and published on the Programme [website](#).

2.2 **DECISION:** The Board reviewed the action log (SB/21/043) and NOTED progress against the actions since the last meeting. The following points were raised and noted:

2.2.1 An additional temporary resource had been engaged to work with Parliament's Heritage Collections Team to map out the roles and responsibilities within the Heritage Decant Project. Whilst the work was taking place later than had been anticipated at the beginning of the year, it was progressing well.

2.2.2 The narrative regarding the collaboration and interdependencies between Parliamentary projects and the Programme would be shared with the Board regularly.

2.2.3 The Clerk of the Parliaments was meeting with the Sponsor Body's Business Case Director on Wednesday 5 May to discuss the options for the House of Lords decant. The Board would be updated before the summer break.

2.3 The Board noted that the House of Lords had a new Lord Speaker, The Rt Hon Lord McFall of Alcluith.

3. Sponsor Body progress report

(SB/21/044)

Period: April 2021

Official: Sarah Johnson, CEO, Sponsor Body

3.1 The paper was taken as read. The following points were raised and noted:

3.1.1 The Main Estimate documentation had been laid by the Estimates Commission with comments. A management response to the Estimates Commission was being prepared for submission after the House returned following State Opening on 11 May 2021.



- 3.1.2 The Sponsor Body was working on revised reporting arrangements which would include a greater focus on data and metrics.
- 3.1.3 A brief regarding the 'continued presence' had been received from the House of Commons Commission (HoCC). The Sponsor Body was preparing a formal task brief for the Delivery Authority to undertake this work.
- 3.1.4 The Board discussed how the work on the continued presence would be delivered. The work would be based on the essential scheme development and would be brought to the Board for regular updates before a formal review in the autumn. It was not thought that diverting resource to focus exclusively on the detail of the continued presence option to the exclusion of all other work would be desirable. The base project scope needed further development before a sensitivity analysis for the continued presence could be applied. This work would form the foundation upon which any scenarios might be tested.
- 3.1.5 The Northern Estate would remain the focus for any potential House of Commons decant location as it had the capacity to provide both suitable accommodation and facilities within the secure perimeter.
- 3.1.6 It was noted that the House of Commons decant remained a complex project much of which lay outside of the Programme's control. Further, following the disbanding of the Northern Estate Programme there were many questions about how important facilities, such as the proposed energy centres, were to be provided. The Board was informed that the Sponsor Body was working with colleagues in the House of Commons to revisit the requirements for a Commons decant location and that these would not be considered in isolation of any other interdependencies.
- 3.1.7 The work of the Parliamentary Masterplan remained critical in better understanding many of the different Programme interdependencies across the Estate, particularly the potential for accommodating the Commons decant within the Northern Estate.

3.2 **DECISION:** The Board NOTED the Sponsor Body Progress Report for April 2021.

4. DA programme report

Period: March 2021

(SB/21/045)

Officials: David Goldstone, CEO, Delivery Authority

Matt White, Programme Director, Delivery Authority

4.1 The CEO for the Delivery Authority introduced the paper. He noted that the non-intrusive survey work was ongoing and that the intrusive survey work was out to market. The DA Board agenda had been reshaped to ensure a quarterly focus on performance. The Programme's Data & Digital strategy and plans had been reviewed by the new Chief Information Officer looking at the ongoing service provision and return on investment.

4.2 The Programme Director pointed out that the report now included the 'path to green' for any issues that had been given a red status. The following points were also raised and noted:



- 4.2.1 Buro Happold had been commissioned by BDP to work out how the continued presence option could be delivered. The organisation were highly regarded specialists and had a detailed working knowledge of the Palace that allowed them to progress quickly.
- 4.2.2 The teams were approaching the work on the continued presence option with an open mind and taking a neutral and balanced approach to the work. No decisions about the outcome had been pre-supposed.
- 4.2.3 The cost of delivering the continued presence work had been ring-fenced in the Main Estimate. The Board would be notified if there were changes to this figure.

4.3 **DECISION:** The Board NOTED the DA programme reports (executive summary) for March 2021.

5. IPA Gateway Review: April 2021

(SB/21/046)

Officials: Mike Brough, Programme & Assurance Director, Sponsor Body

James Young, Head of Programme, Risk & Assurance, Sponsor Body

5.1 The CEO for the Sponsor Body introduced the paper. She said that the observations and recommendations outlined in the paper had not come as a surprise and that she felt the amber rating was a fair assessment of the Sponsor Body's position. The following points were raised and noted:

- 5.1.1 The Board were reminded that the team had only had the report for a short period and needed time to work out a detailed action plan, and management response to the recommendations.
- 5.1.2 The planned governance review would provide an opportunity for further engagement with the House Administrations, back benchers and help map subject matter experts between the Programme and the Houses, for example security and catering experts.
- 5.1.3 Ongoing engagement, and relationship building remained important and urgent. The communications strategy would need to be tightly integrated with the action plan.
- 5.1.4 Concern was expressed that input to the report had not been suitably varied, with most interviewees coming from within the Programme. The conclusions of the report seemed valid however, notwithstanding that the engagement could have been wider. This feedback would be incorporated into the next review.
- 5.1.5 The Chair thanked the Head of Programme, Risk & Assurance for his work in coordinating the responses to the IPA Gateway Review.

5.2 **DECISION:** The Board NOTED the IPA Gateway Review Report, the current work related to the recommendations and that further management actions will be provided to the Audit and Assurance Committee in May and the Board in June.



6. Parliamentary Engagement Strategy & Engagement Plans

(SB/21/047)

Officials: Clementine Brown, Head of Parliamentary Engagement, Sponsor Body

John Thursfield, Engagement Strategy Manager, Sponsor Body

6.1 The Head of Parliamentary Engagement briefed the Board on the Parliamentary Engagement Strategy and Engagement Plan. The strategy and plan would be shared with the House of Commons Administration Committee and House of Lords Services Committee in May. The following points were raised and noted:

- 6.1.1 Engagement had slowed down during the pandemic, although regular workshops and technical engagement had continued. The online workshops had been positively received and over 100 stakeholders engaged; it was likely that these would carry on.
- 6.1.2 Members, Members' staff, and administrative staff would be given the opportunity, during June and July, to complete an online questionnaire, attend focus groups, drop-in centres and interviews. QR codes would be placed around the Estate to allow non-desk-based staff to get involved.
- 6.1.3 It was noted that Members were unlikely to respond well to an online survey, despite the Programme's 'digital first' approach. The Board was assured that this had already been taken into account and that Members would be approached personally, with the questionnaire simply forming the basis for collecting their views. The party groups had provided invaluable feedback during previous consultation and would be engaged again.
- 6.1.4 The questionnaire would cover working spaces, facilities, accessibility, and inclusion topics. The continued presence would also be included. Questions were still being refined to prevent duplication of content with other Parliamentary programmes' consultation. Responses would help inform design decisions, scheme development and options down selection for the Business Case. The Board would be given the opportunity to review the questions before the start of the engagement activities.
- 6.1.5 Concern was expressed that the plan did not make it clear how the team would be identifying the gaps in their engagement, with both key individuals and groups. The Board said it was important that everyone should have the opportunity to get involved. It was suggested that Select Committees should be targeted, not only as a platform to share information about the Programme but also as a source of feedback. Not all MPs and Peers would share the same views as the House Commissions.
- 6.1.6 It was acknowledged that there were still a lot of unknowns in relation to the Programme, such as costs and delivery timescales. The Board said that these needed to be acknowledged and the team should be ready to inform stakeholders why the information was not currently available and when it could be expected. The process of the business case development needed to be clearly explained.
- 6.1.7 The Chair urged the team to make good use of the Board members, and particularly Parliamentary members, in developing their engagement proposals.



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6.2 **DECISION:** The Board NOTED the Parliamentary engagement strategy and Parliamentary engagement plan for June and July 2021.

7. Programme Consent Strategy

(SB/21/048)

Officials: Matt White, Programme Director, Delivery Authority

John Gullick, Head of Stakeholder Engagement & Consents, Delivery Authority

7.1 The Board discussed the Programme Consents Strategy paper. The following points were raised and noted:

- 7.1.1 The paper provided an overview only; there was much more detail supporting the information presented. The Board was assured that there was a lot of work going on to achieve a clear and coordinated approach to dealing with the multiple statutory authorities that would need to be engaged in the pre-application process. Meetings were also being held with other Parliamentary projects to reduce the risk of duplicatory work.
- 7.1.2 It was suggested that the term Heritage Consents was used instead of Listed Building Consents.
- 7.1.3 Consents would be required to obtain the data needed to create technical models. The pre-application consultation process was reviewing the number and type of consents that the Programme would need, as well as the data and technical information that would be required to support any consent applications.

7.2 **DECISION:** The Board NOTED the Programme Consents Strategy.

8. Appointment of SB NEDs to Delivery Authority

(SB/21/049)

Official: Liz Peace, Chair, Sponsor Board

8.1 All officers were asked to leave the meeting, the Board, CEO, and Board Secretary remained in the meeting.

8.2 **DECISION:** The Board AGREED to extend the appointment of Simon Thurley and Simon Wright as non-executive directors of the Delivery Authority Board for a further 2 years.

9. Comments, announcements, and other business

9.1 **DECISION:** The Board NOTED the future agenda (SB/21/050).

9.2 The Chair updated members on the position regarding the appointment of the independent members. It seemed likely, given the terms of the relevant legislation, that these four roles would need to be re-advertised and new appointments made when the current terms expired on 30 June 2021. There was probably sufficient flexibility to allow time to run an open and competitive exercise and confirm appointments by September, which would leave only a short period when the Board would not be technically quorate, but she would be speaking to Sharpe Pritchard LLP later in the week to clarify the position.

9.3 The date of the next meeting would be Monday 7 June 2021.



9.4 The meeting was closed by the Chair at 6.38pm.

10. Papers enclosed for information

10.1 Hansard: Kirsty Blackman Appointment

(SB/21/051)

10.2 Letter Re: Main Supply Estimate 2021/22

(SB/21/052)

Signed by:

Date: 4 May 2021
