



DEBATE PACK

Number CDP-2016/0184, 18 October 2016

House of Lords Reform and the size of the House of Commons

Summary

This debate pack has been compiled ahead of the debate on *House of Lords Reform and the size of the House of Commons* to be held on **Wednesday 19 October 2016** in the House of Commons Chamber. The subject of the debate was chosen by the Scottish National Party for one of its allotted Opposition Day debates.

Text of the motion: That this House notes with concern the size of the unelected House of Lords which, with more than 800 members, is considerably larger than the elected House of Commons; believes that there is no case in a modern democracy for the number of members of an unelected chamber to exceed the number of members of the democratically elected House; cannot condone any Government action that may increase the number of unelected members while reducing the number of elected Members of Parliament, particularly when there are no published plans to concurrently reduce the number of Ministers or amount of support to Government departments; believes that, in the event of an exit from the EU, the return of significant powers will mean additional work for a smaller number of Members of Parliament; calls on the Government to put in place plans to significantly reduce the number of unelected Lords; further calls for a full review of reform of the House of Lords; and calls on the Government to abandon any plans to reduce the number of Members of Parliament until the issue of the size of the unelected chamber is resolved.

The debate pack summarises developments in House of Lords Reform since the 2015 election. The House of Commons Library has a separate briefing paper which outlines [House of Lords Reform – developments in the 2010 Parliament](#).

Constituency boundaries are kept under regular review to ensure Members of Parliament represent roughly the same number of constituents at Westminster. The reviews are carried out by the Boundary Commissions for England, Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland. These are independent bodies that propose constituencies that must meet the Rules for Redistribution set out in statute. These Rules were changed in 2013 to include the requirement that the House of Commons has 600 seats; and that all these constituencies have electorates within 5% of the electoral quota (with the exception of four island seats, including two in Scotland - Na h-Eileanan an Iar and Orkney and Shetland).

Richard Kelly and
Sarah Priddy

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The four commissions commenced the current review, called the 2018 Review, in February 2016. Initial proposals for England, Wales and Northern Ireland were published in September 2016 and the initial proposals for Scotland are to be released on Thursday 20 October 2016. The four Commissions have to complete their review and deliver their final recommendations to the Government by 1 October 2018 and if approved are due to be implemented at the 2020 General Election.

The House of Commons Library prepares a briefing in hard copy and/or online for most non-legislative debates in the Chamber and Westminster Hall other than half-hour debates. Debate Packs are produced quickly after the announcement of parliamentary business. They are intended to provide a summary or overview of the issue being debated and identify relevant briefings and useful documents, including press and parliamentary material. More detailed briefing can be prepared for Members on request to the Library.

1. Summary of House of Lords Reform since 2015

The House of Commons Library has a separate briefing paper which outlines [House of Lords Reform – developments in the 2010 Parliament](#).

1.1 The Government's position on Lords reform

The [Conservative Manifesto](#) from the 2015 General Election stated that

We will ensure that the House of Lords fulfils its valuable role as a chamber of legislative scrutiny and revision

While we still see a strong case for introducing an elected element into our second chamber, this is not a priority in the next Parliament. We have already allowed for expulsion of members for poor conduct and will ensure the House of Lords continues to work well by addressing issues such as the size of the chamber and the retirement of peers.¹

On 14 September 2015 the Prime Minister responded to a Parliamentary Question on the Government's policy on Lords reform. The Prime Minister said:

We have already supported changes allowing for the expulsion of members for poor conduct and will work to ensure the House of Lords continues to function well by looking, with others, at issues such as the size of the chamber and the retirement of peers.²

During a debate on House of Lords Reform on 15 September 2015, Baroness Stowell of Beeston, the Leader of the House of Lords, announced her intention to establish cross-party discussions on addressing the size of the House of Lords.³

In May 2016, the then Cabinet Office Minister, John Penrose, informed the House that:

Given the very large and urgent list of other constitutional reforms currently underway, it's hard to justify giving Lords reform a higher priority than other manifesto promises. We will continue to consider steps that are able to command support from all sides of the House. The Leader of the House of Lords has convened cross-party talks to discuss these issues, and those talks continue.⁴

1.2 Continued concern over the size of the House of Lords

Members of the House of Lords have continued to express frustration with the size of the House through questions in the House. On 21 July 2015 Lord Campbell-Savours asked "why do we not avoid public

¹ [The Conservative Party Manifesto 2015](#)

² [PQ 9202 \[House of Lords: Reform\]](#), 14 September 2015

³ [HL Debate 15 September 2015 cc1750](#)

⁴ [PQ 35749 \[House of Lords: Reform\]](#), 9 May 2016

ridicule, bite the bullet and ask the Prime Minister to freeze the size of the House by adopting a new formula: one retirement or one death equals one new appointment?"⁵

In an oral PQ in the House of Lords on 25 June 2015, Lord Campbell-Savours asked what proposals the Government had for the appointment system in the House of Lords. In response, Baroness Stowell of Beston, the Leader of the House of Lords, said that appointments to the Lords remain a matter for the Prime Minister, and that:

If and when a Dissolution Honours List marking the end of the previous Parliament is published, it would be surprising if it did not reflect the fact that there were two parties in government. More importantly, the message I want to direct to all noble Lords is that, regardless of party balance, this House has a very important role in the legislative process, and in doing our work, this House is not, and should not become, an alternative platform for party politics.⁶

The creation of 45 new peerages in the Dissolution Honours list announced on 28 August 2015 caused further disquiet.⁷ On 22 October 2015 Alan Brown MP said that:

Since I was elected in May, 44 new Lords have been sworn in to the other place, despite this Government's pledge to cut the cost of politics. Given that, yesterday, even the hon. Member for North East Somerset (Mr Rees-Mogg) expressed his concern about the performance of the other place, will the Leader of the House now agree, on the second time of asking, to bring forward a debate in Government time on the merits, performance and value for money of the other place—because we might now all agree on abolition?⁸

In a debate on House of Lords Reform in the House of Lords on 15 September 2015, Baroness Stowell of Beeston said that "this Government are clear that the House cannot keep growing indefinitely". She said that "As Leader I am conscious of our responsibility to examine and address the question of our size".⁹

She stressed the importance of ensuring any approach to answering the question of the size of the House was as simple as possible. She suggested:

That is why some of the simpler, although sensitive, approaches such as age and term limits, which will doubtless attract commentary this afternoon—both positive and negative—deserve further consideration.¹⁰

She also said announced that "now is the time to begin discussions on a cross-party basis".¹¹ She indicated that there was support for talks from other party leaders, and that they would begin after the Conference Recess:

⁵ [HL Deb 21 July 2015 c1000](#)

⁶ [HL Deb 25 June 2015 c1694](#)

⁷ Gov.uk, [Press Release: Dissolution Honours](#), 27 August 2015

⁸ [HC Deb 22 Oct 2015 c1155](#)

⁹ [HL Debate 15 September 2015 cc1748-1749](#)

¹⁰ *Ibid* c1750

¹¹ *Ibid* c1750

From my conversations with the leaders of the other groups, I sense that there is now a welcome and shared will to move forward, which is why I now want to convene discussions with the other leaders and the Convener to drive this process on. I will lead those discussions in the months to come and I have scheduled our first meeting in the weeks following the Conference Recess. I hope that today's debate can provide the backdrop which will inform that process as it gets under way, because however we proceed, all Benches must play their part.¹²

In the same debate Lord Steel of Aikwood suggested having a "cut-off" age at which members of the Lords had to retire:

if we had an automatic cut-off with anybody over the age of 80 at the end of each Parliament departing, it would enable the House to be refreshed after each election without the numbers becoming excessive. In fact, if this had happened at the last election, 158 Members would have left. If it happens at the end of this Parliament, 260—including myself—would have to go. I think that that is probably a very good thing—I am not referring to myself, but to the generality. It would enable an incoming Government to make new creations without the numbers becoming excessive.¹³

Following David Cameron's resignation as Prime Minister, in July 2016, a resignation honours list was published in August 2016.¹⁴ It included a total of 16 new life peerages.

In early September 2016, after his election as Lord Speaker, Lord Fowler, argued that:

"I don't think we can justify a situation where you have over 800 peers at the same time as you're brining the Commons down to 600.

"The principle, it seems to me, is that we should have fewer Lords. We should certainly not have more peers than there are Members of Parliament. I think that's a principle that would find agreement amongst most of the House".¹⁵

Later in September, Lord Cormack, a founder of the Campaign for an Effective Second Chamber,¹⁶ suggested that in order to reduce numbers, those who "barely attend" would have to be excluded. He also acknowledged that the question of political representation needed to be addressed. He suggested that, following a general election, either party groups or the House acting as an electoral college "should decide who sat in the next Parliament".¹⁷

In a blog post on 6 October 2016, Meg Russell, Director of the Constitution Unit, UCL, suggested how the size of the Lords could be reduced:

¹² Ibid c1750

¹³ Ibid c1754

¹⁴ Cabinet Office, *Resignation Honours 2016*, 4 August 2016

¹⁵ Daniel Bond, "[Lord Fowler: Time to axe more than 200 peers](#)", *PoliticsHome*, 5 September 2016

¹⁶ A group that argues against the introduction of elections to the second chamber [Second Chamber, *The Campaign*]

¹⁷ Lord Cormack, "[Lord Cormack: Here's how we reduce the size of the House of Lords](#)", *PoliticsHome*, 29 September 2016

I argue that this requires four interconnected things: a large number of departures before 2020, a long-term cap on the size of the House, limitations on future appointments, and an agreed principle of balance between the parties (and other groups).¹⁸

1.3 Retirement from the House of Lords

Voluntary retirement from the House of Lords was placed on a statutory basis by the [House of Lords Reform Act 2014](#). In effect, this replaced the non-statutory voluntary retirement scheme in place since 2011. Members can retire under the 2014 Act by giving written notice to the Clerk of the Parliaments specifying a date upon which they want to retire. Over 50 members of the House of Lords have retired under the Act. A list of retirees is available [here](#).

1.4 Strathclyde Review

On 26 October 2015 the House of Lords twice amended a motion so as to decline to consider a statutory instrument that would have implemented the Government's policy on tax credits. This prompted some to question whether the House of Lords had acted properly in voting down a statutory instrument, and whether it had encroached on the financial primacy of the House of Commons. Others stated that the Lords had acted within its normal competence and no conventions had been broken. The incident drew attention to these conventions and how they operate when the Government lacks a majority of members in the House of Lords.

As a result, the Government launched a "rapid review" of the relationship between the two Houses of Parliament which was chaired by a former Leader of the House of Lords, Lord Strathclyde.¹⁹

Lord Strathclyde published his [report](#) on 17 December 2015. In it he recommended that there should be a new procedure, set out in statute, which would allow the Lords to invite the Commons to "think again" when there is a disagreement on a statutory instrument between the two Houses. The Commons would then be able to insist on its view. He also suggested that a review should take place, with the involvement of the House of Commons Procedure Committee, into the circumstances in which statutory instruments should be subject to Commons-only procedures. Lastly, he suggested that it would be appropriate for the Government to take steps to ensure that "too much is not left for implementation by statutory instrument" in order to mitigate excessive use of the new process.²⁰

The Government are yet to issue a formal response to the recommendations of the Strathclyde Report. In a statement in the House of Lords on 17 December 2015, Baroness Stowell of Beston said that the Government would allow a full debate on the Report in the

¹⁸ Meg Russell, "[Reducing the size of the House of Lords: here's how to do it](#)", *Constitution Unit blog*, 6 October 2016

¹⁹ [HC Deb 28 Oct 2015 c349](#)

²⁰ [Strathclyde Review: Secondary legislation and the primacy of the House of Commons](#), December 2015

Lords in the New Year before the Government responded in full.²¹ The Lords debate took place on 13 January 2015, on a motion to move that this House takes note of Command Paper Cm 9177, *Secondary legislation and the primacy of the House of Commons*.²²

Further details on the Strathclyde Review and on the conventions between the House of Commons and the House of Lords are available in the House of Commons Library Briefing Paper, [Conventions on the relationship between the House of Commons and House of Lords](#).

1.5 Size of the House of Commons

Constituency boundaries are kept under regular review to ensure Members of Parliament represent roughly the same number of constituents at Westminster. The reviews are carried out by the Boundary Commissions for England, Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland. These are independent bodies that propose constituencies that must meet the Rules for Redistribution set out in statute. These Rules were changed in 2013 to include the requirement that the House of Commons has 600 seats; and that all these constituencies (with the exception of four island seats) have electorates within 5% of the electoral quota. This is the total number of voters in the UK divided by the total number of constituencies (with the exception of the four island seats and their electorates).

The four commissions commenced the current review, called the 2018 Review, in February 2016. Initial proposals for England, Wales and Northern Ireland were published in September 2016 and the initial proposals for Scotland are to be released on Thursday 20 October 2016. The four Commissions have to complete their review and deliver their final recommendations to the Government by 1 October 2018.

The 2013 Review was the first to use these new Rules and would have reduced the size of the House of Commons to 600. However, the review was halted after then Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg announced he would instruct his party to vote against the implementation of the Boundary Commissions' proposals. A vote was avoided; the date the Commissions were required to report was changed to 2018. After the Commissions' report in 2018, the Secretary of State must lay their reports before Parliament. The Secretary of State must then lay before Parliament a draft Order in Council to give effect to the proposed boundary changes. This Order requires the approval of both Houses of Parliament. The constituency boundaries included in the final recommendations of the 2018 Review, if approved, are due to be used at the 2020 General election.

Regular reviews of constituency boundaries have been carried out since 1944, although there have been some changes to the timing, the implementation and the Rules for the reviews. Scotland and Wales were historically over-represented at Westminster. Scotland lost this position

²¹ [HL Deb 17 December 2015 cc2189-2190](#)

²² [House of Lords Business, Wednesday 13 January 2015](#)

in 2001, and Wales will too after the next review is implemented. Historically, the number of MPs has varied, but it has been over 600 since the 19th century.

2. Press Articles and Blogs

Meg Russell, [‘Reducing the size of the House of Lords: here’s how to do it’](#), The Constitution Unit, 6 October 2016

Meg Russell, [‘800 peers and counting: how can we cut the size of the House of Lords?’](#), Democratic Audit UK, 11 October 2016

Tom Peck, [‘Absentee Lords could lose their seats’](#), The Independent, 30 September 2016

Lord Cormack, [‘Here’s how we reduce the size of the House of Lords’](#), PoliticsHomes, 29 September 2016

David Winnick, [‘The double standards on boundary changes are clear - just look at the House of Lords’](#), The New Statesman, 19 September 2016

[Slimming the House of Commons: Boundary dispute, Redrawing Britain’s political map will hurt Labour most](#), The Economist, 17 September 2016

Lord Fowler, [‘The Lords cannot justify its current size’](#), PoliticsHome, 16 September 2016

Charles Pattie, Professor of Electoral Geography, University of Sheffield, [‘The great British constituency shake-up is no anti-Labour conspiracy’](#), The Conversation, 14 September 2016

Gavin Stump, [‘Boundary changes: Why UK’s political map is being re-drawn’](#), BBC News: In-depth, 13 September 2016

Josh May, [“Conservative MP Charles Walker rails against ‘perverse’ boundary changes”](#), PoliticsHomes, 8 September 2016

Jon Stone, [‘House of Lords size should be cut by 200 peers, Lords Speaker says: Lord Fowler said it was difficult to justify the size of the upper house’](#), Independent, 6 September 2016

Daniel Bond, [‘Lord Fowler: Time to axe more than 200 peers’](#), PoliticsHome, 5 September 2016

Frances Perraudin, [‘Number of MPs to be cut from 650 to 600’](#), The Guardian, 12 February 2016

Nigel Morris, [‘Cutting size of House of Commons will thwart effort to increase female and ethnic minority MPs in Parliament, David Cameron told’](#), The Independent, 8 August 2016

Lord Strathclyde and Baroness Smith, [‘Lords Reform: Instrument of Change’](#), PoliticsHome, 11 January 2016

Meg Russell, [‘The Strathclyde report: a threat or an opportunity for the Lords?’](#), The Constitution Unit, 18 December 2015

3. Parliamentary Questions

Asked by Kevin Brennan (Cardiff West) (Lab)

May we debate why the Government want 50 fewer elected Members of Parliament but keep on creating more unelected Tory peers? The hon. Lady's party received 36.8% of the votes at the general election, but 43.7% of the House of Lords already consists of party political Tory peers. Will her party stop creating peers, and drop its plans to gerrymander the House of Commons?

Answered by Dr Coffey

The purpose of the Act that was passed during the last Parliament was to ensure that constituencies were of equal size, and I thought that very fair. I find it extraordinary that there are 40 MPs in Wales, representing considerably smaller constituencies than the average in England and Scotland. Someone who says that he believes in fairness should accept that that is what the electorate deserves.

26 May 2016 | Business questions | House of Commons | 611 c706

Asked by: Baroness Hayman (CB)

My Lords, the noble Baroness the Leader pointed out that the Conservative manifesto said that there would be no comprehensive reform of this House during this Parliament. In so far as that is shorthand for not introducing a Bill for an elected House, it is very welcome to some of us. However, will she make it clear that it does not rule out sensible, incremental reform of your Lordships' House, which means taking decisive action to reduce the numbers in this House?

Answered by: Baroness Stowell of Beeston

I agree with the noble Baroness about incremental reform. As she knows, and as I have said before from this Dispatch Box, one

of the great achievements in the last Parliament was the incremental reform which we brought in and which she led through her Private Member's Bill. The other important reform was the facility for Peers in this House to retire—an approach that I very much support. Regarding further steps along that track, if there is broad consensus and we are able to attract cross-party agreement on further incremental reforms, I shall be interested in supporting that. Lady Perry is the most recent example of retirement, and her speech yesterday was a very good illustration of the power of retirement from your Lordships' House.

24 May 2016 | Oral questions | House of Lords | 773 c260

Asked by Chris Law (Dundee West) (SNP):

Extraordinarily, the Prime Minister has made 233 appointments to the unelected House of Lords since he was elected, making a seam-bursting total of 826 Members, yet only yesterday many of us here received an

email from the Boundaries Commission informing us of a forthcoming review of the Chamber to reduce the number of Scottish MPs from 59 to 53, which will result in the House of Lords being 40% larger than this House. Will the Leader of the House bring to this Chamber an urgent debate on the rough wooing of our democracy in Scotland, where we will have more Tory Lords than MPs apparently representing our country?

Answered by The Leader of the House of Commons (Chris Grayling):

It is important to remember that this is the elected House. This is the House that ultimately has the final say on matters, and it is right and proper that we have a structure of representation here that represents the balance of the population of the country. It is the case that the Boundary Commission has a remit to align the size of constituencies across the country. That matter is not related to the other place. It is about ensuring that there is fairness of representation in this elected House, which is the one that ultimately decides what happens in this country.

25 Feb 2016 | Business questions | House of Commons | 606 c483

Asked by: Lord Wallace of Saltaire

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to reduce the number of Ministers in the House of Commons proportionately to the intended reduction in the overall number of members in order to avoid any increase in executive influence over the elected House.

Answered by: The Parliamentary Secretary, Cabinet Office (Lord Bridges of Headley) (Con)

My Lords, we have acknowledged the link between the size of the House of Commons and the size of the Executive, both in this House and in the other place, and we will continue to keep the number of Ministers under review as the consequences of the forthcoming boundary reforms are delivered and begin to take effect.

30 Nov 2015 | Oral questions | House of Lords | 767 cc925-8

Asked by: Justin Madders

To ask the Prime Minister, what his policy is on reform of the House of Lords.

Answered by: Mr David Cameron

We have already supported changes allowing for the expulsion of members for poor conduct and will work to ensure the House of Lords continues to function well by looking, with others, at issues such as the size of the chamber and the retirement of peers.

14 Sept 2015 | House of Common | HC9202

Asked by: Lord Rennard

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to limit the size of the membership of the House of Lords.

Answered by: The Lord Privy Seal (Baroness Stowell of Beeston) (Con)

My Lords, our manifesto recognised that the House cannot keep growing indefinitely, but we must refresh our expertise and experience. My first priority is promoting the purpose of the House and enhancing our accountability to inform our individual responsibility as Members. I also intend to make every effort to build cross-party support in finding the right solution to addressing the size of the House.

07 Sep 2015 | Oral questions | House of Lords | 764 cc1211-3

Asked by: Lord Rennard (LD)

Does the Leader of House agree that there should be a moratorium on further appointments to this House until sensible measures are agreed to reduce its size and that seeking consensus through a constitutional convention, involving all parties, is the best way forward for reform of this House in the ...

Answered by: Baroness Stowell of Beeston

I find it a little surprising that the noble Lord suggests—particularly from his Benches—that there should be a moratorium on appointments to this House. It is very important that we continue to refresh the membership of the House, and the new Peers who will be joining us over the next few weeks will add greatly to the work it does. I do not agree with the way forward proposed by the noble Lord: radical reform was tried in the last Parliament. We stood on a clear manifesto and I am now looking forward to talks with other party leaders, informed by things like the debate on this topic scheduled by my noble friend the Chief Whip for next week.

07 Sep 2015 | Oral questions | House of Lords | 764 c1211

4. Other Parliamentary Material

4.1 Statements

House of Lords Statement

[Strathclyde Review](#)

17 December 2015

House of Commons Statement

[Strathclyde Review](#)

17 December 2015

4.2 Debates

Backbench Debate

[House of Lords Reform](#)

14 January 2016

Westminster Hall Debate

[House of Lords Reform](#)

23 June 2015

House of Lords Debate on a motion to take note

[House of Lords Reform](#)

15 September 2015

Westminster Hall Debate

[House of Lords Reform](#)

23 June 2015

4.3 Legislation

Commons Second Reading

[House of Lords Act 1999 \(Amendment\) Bill \[HL\]](#)

7 September 2016

Ten Minute Rule Bill, Motion for leave to bring in

[House of Lords Reform \(Exclusion of Hereditary Peers\)](#)

26 April 2016

4.4 Points of Order

Philip Davies (Shipley) (Con): I absolutely endorse everything that my hon. Friend the Member for Broxbourne (Mr Walker) has just said. In addition to that, we also have the situation whereby the Government propose to reduce the number of MPs by 50 but not to reduce the number of Ministers by an equal proportion, thereby giving the Government more control over the House of Commons. That is clearly an outrage, and surely it is something that needs to be considered in conjunction with the points raised by my hon. Friend.

Mr Speaker: I am very grateful to both hon. Members for raising their points of order. Let me seek to deal, in so far as they require to be dealt with, with each in turn. First, in relation to the point of order from the hon. Member for Broxbourne, who is, as we all know, the illustrious Chair of the Procedure Committee of the House, I remind colleagues that the hon. Gentleman asked the Chair by what means he could register his concern. As the hon. Gentleman knows, because he is a perceptive and sagacious fellow, he has found his own salvation. He has made his own point with his own inimitable eloquence, and it is on the record. I know how strongly he feels about it, and I know there are many Members across the House who feel very strongly about it, and these matters will doubtless be further debated.

Secondly, in relation to the hon. Member for Shipley, I note the force of his point about reductions in the number of MPs needing, as he sees it, to be accompanied by reductions in the number of Ministers. The hon. Gentleman has got such a long-established good memory for what people have said in the past that I feel sure that, although he did not say it today, he will be well aware that I myself expatiated on this matter on 19 January 2011 in a lecture to the Institute for Government. On that occasion, I made the point that it would be a rum business to reduce the number of MPs but not to cut the number of Ministers. I said it then and was right then, and therefore I am very happy to say it again, five and a half years later, and to be right a second time.

We had better leave it there. I am not sure that either of them was a point of order, but they were jolly good fun.

08 Sep 2016 | Proceeding contributions | House of Commons | 614 c502

5. Further Reading

5.1 Commons Library briefings

House of Commons Library, [Limitations on the number of Ministers](#), 7 October 2016

The [Ministerial and Other Salaries Act 1975](#) sets out the maximum number of paid ministerial posts. The maximum number is 109; this is broken down by category.

The [House of Commons Disqualification Act 1975](#) provides that not more than 95 holders of Ministerial offices may sit and vote in the House of Commons at any one time. There is no equivalent legal restraint on the number of Ministers in the Lords.

The proportion of Members of the House of Commons who have been part of the payroll vote has varied from 19-22% between 1979 and 2016.

The Public Administration Select Committee has noted that the proportion of those holding government posts would be exacerbated by the proposed reduction in the size of the House of Commons from 650 to 600 following the forthcoming Boundary Review. Their recommendations included cutting the number of PPSs to one per Government Department and that the Ministerial and Other Salaries Act 1975 should be seen as imposing a strict limit on paid and unpaid ministers.

House of Commons Library, [Constituency boundary reviews and the number of MPs](#), 25 February 2016

House of Commons Library, [Conventions on the relationship between the House of Commons and House of Lords](#), 7 January 2016

House of Commons Library, [House of Lords Reform - developments in the 2010 Parliament](#), 12 January 2015

5.2 Lords Library briefings

House of Lords Library, [Life Peerages Created Since 1997](#), 5 August 2016

House of Lords Library, [Statistics on Composition of the House of Lords and Changes to the Size of the Membership](#), 9 September 2015

House of Lords Library, [House of Lords: Statistical Profile of Membership](#), 23 March 2016

House of Lords Library, [Size of the House of Lords](#), 29 January 2016

House of Lords Library, [Second Chambers](#), 10 March 2014

5.3 Select Committee reports

Smaller Government: What do Ministers do?

[Further Report with the Government Response to the Committee's Seventh Report of Session 2010-12](#)

Public Administration Committee, 15th Report of Session 2010-12
25 October 2011

[Smaller Government: What do Ministers do?](#)

Public Administration Committee, 7th Report of Session 2010-12
HC 530, 31 March 2011

[Too Many Ministers?](#)

Public Administration Committee, 9th Report of Session 2009–10
HC 457 16 March 2010

5.4 Government reports

[Strathclyde Review: Secondary legislation and the primacy of the House of Commons](#), December 2015

5.5 Useful links

Parliament website

[Information on the current composition of the House of Lords](#)

Boundary Commission websites

[Boundary Commission for England](#)

[Boundary Commission for Wales](#)

[Boundary Commission for Scotland](#)

[Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland](#)

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