



HOUSE OF LORDS

Library Note

Governance and Administration of the House of Lords

This Library Note sets out how the House of Lords is structured, governed and managed, including joint working with the House of Commons. It also provides a brief history of recent changes to the governance and administration of the House of Lords.

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1. Introduction

This Note sets out how the House of Lords is structured, governed and managed, including joint working with the House of Commons. An overview of the administration of the House of Commons is available on the UK Parliament website.¹

2. Governance and Administration of the House of Lords

2.1 Usual Channels

The usual channels consist of the Leaders and Whips of the three main political parties. For certain purposes the usual channels include the Convenor of the Crossbench Peers. The usual channels are primarily responsible for making decisions about the arrangement of parliamentary business. Through their membership of the House of Lords Commission, the House of Lords Services Committee and the House of Lords Finance Committee (see section 2.3 of this Library Note), the usual channels also play a key role in decisions about the governance and administration of the House, including on facilities and services for Members. The usual channels handle the distribution of individual desks and rooms to Members.

2.2 Office Holders

Lord Speaker

The Lord Speaker presides over daily business in the House of Lords Chamber (supported by a panel of Deputy Speakers) and is an ambassador for the work of the House. They also chair the main domestic committee of the House: the House of Lords Commission (see section 2.3 of this Library Note).² The office of Lord Speaker was created following the Constitutional Reform Act 2005 when the historical roles of the Lord Chancellor, including the Speakership of the House of Lords, were re-distributed and reformed.

The Lord Speaker is elected for a period of five years, renewable once, under Standing Order 19. To date, there have been three Lord Speakers. The first election took place in June 2006 when Baroness Hayman was elected, followed by the election of Baroness D'Souza in July 2011. Lord Fowler is the current Lord Speaker. He was elected in June 2016 and took office in September 2016. The result of the election is subject to the approval of the Queen, notified to the House by the Lord Great Chamberlain. Upon election, the successful candidate is required to lay aside outside financial interests falling into specific categories, including remunerated directorships and other employment, as a salaried officeholder. They also become unaffiliated from any party or group within the House and are expected not to vote.

In a self-regulating House, the Lord Speaker has no power to call Members to order, to decide who speaks next, or to select amendments.³ However, the Lord Speaker, or their deputy, does “collect the voices” and calls for divisions when necessary. In addition to the presiding officer

¹ UK Parliament website, [‘The House of Commons Administration Explained’](#), accessed 10 August 2017.

² For further background information, see: Speakership of the House of Lords Committee, [The Speakership of the House of Lords](#), 19 December 2005, HL Paper 92 of session 2005–06; and [The Speakership of the House of Lords](#), 27 November 2003, HL Paper 199 of session 2002–03.

³ In contrast to the role of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

role, the Lord Speaker has ceremonial duties within the House: for example, at the State Opening of Parliament (when they are in the Royal Procession), and when visiting Heads of State address Members of the two Houses. They also have an ambassadorial role receiving distinguished overseas visitors, making their own visit to other parliaments and participating in inter-parliamentary speakers' conferences. The Lord Speaker conducts outreach activities to engage the public in the work of the Lords.

On the administrative side, in addition to chairing the House of Lords Commission (see section 2.3 of this Library Note), the Lord Speaker has formal responsibility for the security of the Lords part of the parliamentary estate and is one of the three 'key holders' of Westminster Hall (with the Lord Great Chamberlain and the Speaker of the House of Commons). Proposals to make documentaries about the House of Lords as an institution are also addressed directly to the Lord Speaker, for consideration by the Filming Steering Group, which they chair.

Senior Deputy Speaker

The Senior Deputy Speaker⁴ is a salaried officeholder of the House of Lords who deputises for the Lord Speaker in all their duties and is empowered, for example, to recall the House during a period of adjournment in the absence of the Lord Speaker.⁵ The Senior Deputy Speaker also presides over the House when it is in committee in the Chamber. The Senior Deputy Speaker is appointed formally as the Chairman of Committees, but is known as the Senior Deputy Speaker.⁶

At the beginning of every session, and whenever a vacancy occurs, a Peer is appointed by the House to fill the salaried office of Chairman of Committees (the Senior Deputy Speaker) under Standing Order 61.⁷ Like the Lord Speaker, the Senior Deputy Speaker is required to lay aside outside financial interests and any party or group affiliation on appointment and for the duration of their time in office. The current holder, Lord McFall of Alcluith, was appointed in July 2016 and took office on 1 September 2016. The Senior Deputy Speaker is assisted by a panel of unsalaried Deputy Chairmen. Nominations for the office of Senior Deputy Speaker are agreed by the usual channels.

The Senior Deputy Speaker is the chairman *ex officio* of all committees unless the House otherwise directs. In practice this means that they usually chair the following select committees:

- Liaison Committee
- Procedure Committee

⁴ This is a new post which was agreed by the House at the beginning of the 2016–17 session.

⁵ The position is in some ways analogous to the Chairman of Ways and Means in the House of Commons.

⁶ This is because the title of Chairman of Committees appears in several places in legislation.

⁷ The position of Chairman of Committees existed from the early 18th Century in a semi-official capacity, it having long been accepted that as a general rule or by convention there should be one Lord who, if present, took the chair in all committees of the whole House and of select committees (mainly private bill committees). The position first received official sanction in 1800 when the House adopted resolutions defining its basic duties. Thereafter the Chairman of Committees was appointed on a sessional basis and, once appointed, automatically took the chair in all committees unless the House decided otherwise. Until 2005 the Chairman of Committees chaired the House Committee and was responsible for the security of the Lords part of the parliamentary estate. Both of these functions were transferred to the Lord Speaker. For further background see: 'The Origin of the Office of Chairman of Committees in the House of Lords' by John C Sainty, House of Lords Record Office Memorandum No. 52 (1974); and 'New Light on the Office of the Chairman of Committees' by John C Sainty, House of Lords Record Office Memorandum No 79 (1990).

- Committee for Privileges and Conduct
- Committee of Selection
- Hybrid Instruments Committee
- Standing Orders (Private Bills) Committee
- Private bill committees

The Senior Deputy Speaker also takes certain administrative decisions in their own right, without reference to the committees. In the House the Senior Deputy Speaker speaks on, and answers oral and written questions concerning, the Administration and the work of the House of Lords Commission (of which they are a member) and of the committees they chair. All business on matters relating to the Services and Finance Committees are tabled to the Senior Deputy Speaker who may delegate responsibility for answering written questions or debates to the relevant chairmen (see section 2.3 of this Library Note). Counsel to the Chairman of Committees provides legal advice and assistance where required, including in relation to Unopposed Bill Committees. In addition to their duties in the House, the Senior Deputy Speaker exercises a general supervision and control over private bills, personal bills, Scottish provisional order confirmation bills and hybrid instruments. This includes naming members of select and joint committees appointed to consider such matters,⁸ including the chairman of any select committee on a private bill they appoint. The Senior Deputy Speaker also chairs the Freedom of Information Panel.

2.3 Domestic Committees

Members of the House serve on a number of committees of the House of Lords concerned with the governance and administration of the House. The House of Lords Commission is the main domestic committee of the House and is supported by two other domestic committees: the Services Committee and Finance Committee. Members also serve on the Audit Committee, the Works of Art Advisory Panel and the Consultative Panel on Parliamentary Security. An organisation chart is available in Appendix I of this Library Note.

The following other domestic committees, all chaired by the Senior Deputy Speaker, are not considered in this Note as they concern the proceedings of the House rather than its governance:

- Procedure Committee
- Committee for Privileges and Conduct
- Committee of Selection

⁸ Unless they are of the opinion that any such committee should be selected and proposed to the House by the Committee of Selection or unless at least two members of that committee request a meeting for that purpose.

House of Lords Commission

The House of Lords Commission is the main domestic committee of the House.⁹ It provides high-level strategic and political direction for the House of Lords Administration on behalf of the House. The Commission also agrees the annual Estimate, supervises the arrangements relating to financial support for Members, works with the Management Board to develop, set and approve the strategic business plan, the annual business and financial plans for the Administration, and monitor the performance of the Administration against agreed targets.

The membership of the Commission, which is chaired by the Lord Speaker, consists of the Senior Deputy Speaker; the Leaders of the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat parties; the Convenor of the Crossbench Peers; the Chairmen of the Services and Finance Committees plus two other backbench members from the groups not holding the chairmanship of either the Services Committee or Finance Committee; and two external non-executive members.

It usually meets monthly when the House is sitting; meets jointly with the House of Commons Commission, as required; and has agreed to hold an annual awayday with the House of Lords Management Board. Further details of the work of the House of Lords Commission, including members and decisions documents, are published on the UK Parliament website.¹⁰

Services Committee

The Services Committee supports the House of Lords Commission by agreeing day-to-day policy on member-facing services, providing advice on strategic policy decisions when sought by the Commission, and overseeing the delivery and implementation of both. The Committee of Selection nominates the Chairman, (currently Lord Laming). The Committee has ten members, including a frontbench or senior member from each of the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat party groups; the Convenor of the Crossbench Peers; two backbenchers from each of the Conservative and Labour groups; and one backbencher each from the Liberal Democrat group and Crossbench Peers. The Chairman may answer written questions and debates on Services Committee matters if delegated by the Senior Deputy Speaker. Further details of the work of the Services Committee, including members, agendas, unreserved papers, decisions documents and minutes, are published on the UK Parliament website.¹¹

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee supports the House of Lords Commission by considering expenditure on services provided from the Estimate for the House of Lords; with the assistance of the Management Board, preparing the forecast outturn, Estimate and financial plan for submission to the Commission; monitoring the financial performance of the House Administration; and reporting to the Commission on the financial implications of significant proposals. The Committee of Selection nominates the Chairman, (currently Baroness Doocey). The Chairman presents any Committee reports to the House and replies to debates on those reports. The Committee has ten members, including a frontbench or senior member from each of the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat party groups; two backbenchers from each of the

⁹ In the House of Commons the equivalent body is the [House of Commons Commission](#). The latter is a statutory body, established under the House of Commons (Administration) Act 1978, which is chaired by the Speaker. The House of Commons Commission is supported by the [Administration Committee](#) and the [Finance Committee](#).

¹⁰ UK Parliament website, '[House of Lords: House of Lords Commission](#)', accessed on 4 May 2017.

¹¹ UK Parliament website, '[House of Lords: Services Committee](#)', accessed on 4 May 2017.

Conservative, Labour and Crossbencher groups; and one backbencher from the Liberal Democrat group. The Chairman may answer written questions and debates on Finance Committee matters if delegated by the Senior Deputy Speaker. Further details of the work of the Finance Committee, including members, agendas, unreserved papers and minutes, are published on the UK Parliament website.¹²

Audit Committee

The Audit Committee was established in 2002 and is appointed by the House of Lords Commission,¹³ which is responsible for its membership and terms of reference. Its membership includes five Members of the House and two external members. The current Chairman is Liz Hewitt, one of the external members, who is also an *ex officio* member of the House of Lords Commission.

The Audit Committee considers internal and external audit reports and management responses and provides advice to the Clerk of the Parliaments (in their role as the Accounting Officer) and senior management on the effectiveness of internal controls. The Committee also provides advice on risk management, financial good practice, value-for-money and governance, and reviews the annual financial statements and accounts.

The Committee usually meets six times a year, including two joint meetings with the House of Commons Administration Estimate Audit Committee, and reports annually to the House. The members hold no other office in the House and, with the exception of the Chairman, do not sit on any other domestic committee.¹⁴ Further details of the work of the Audit Committee, including members, agendas and minutes, are published on the UK Parliament website.¹⁵

Lord Speaker's Advisory Panel on Works of Art

The Advisory Panel on Works of Art is appointed by the Lord Speaker to advise them on matters relating to works of art in the House of Lords, including the House's collection of paintings and other artworks. Following the report of the Leader's Group on Governance in the House of Lords (see section 3.2 of this Library Note), the Advisory Panel was established to replace the House of Lords Works of Art Committee. The twelve members of the Advisory Panel are appointed by the Lord Speaker, including the Chairman, (currently Baroness Maddock). Further details of the work of the Advisory Panel, including members, agenda and unreserved papers, are published on the UK Parliament website.¹⁶

Consultative Panel on Parliamentary Security

Following changes to the governance of security in Parliament (see section 2.4 of this Library Note), a Consultative Panel on Parliamentary Security was established to replace the Joint Committee on Security at the beginning of the 2015 Parliament. The Consultative Panel is an informal body, which supports the Speaker of the House of Commons and the Lord Speaker in the discharge of their political responsibility for security. It also receives regular briefings from the Director of Security for Parliament in order to maintain a thorough, up-to-date

¹² UK Parliament website, '[House of Lords: Finance Committee](#)', accessed on 4 May 2017.

¹³ As a body analogous to a select committee.

¹⁴ House of Lords Offices Committee, *Fifth Report*, 16 May 2002, HL Paper 105 of session 2001–02.

¹⁵ UK Parliament website, '[House of Lords: Audit Committee](#)', accessed on 4 May 2017.

¹⁶ UK Parliament website, '[House of Lords: Works of Art Advisory Panel](#)', accessed 4 May 2017.

understanding of the security of Parliament; provides a forum in which the views of Members of both Houses can be communicated and discussed; provides advocacy to other Members for any necessary changes in security arrangements; and ensures better awareness by Members of security management and governance arrangements. The members of the Consultative Panel are appointed by the Speaker and the Lord Speaker for their respective Houses and includes Members from both Houses. The Chairman of Ways and Means in the House of Commons acts as the Chair.

Liaison Committee

While not one of the main domestic committees concerned with the governance of the House, the Liaison Committee is appointed to advise the House on the resources required for select committee work and also allocates resources between select committees, among other roles. The Senior Deputy Speaker chairs the Committee. Further details of the work of the Liaison Committee are published on the UK Parliament website.¹⁷

2.4 House Administration

Management Board

The House of Lords Management Board's terms of reference are as follows:

The Board takes strategic and corporate decisions for the House Administration within the policy framework set by the House of Lords Commission.¹⁸ The Board:

- Collectively provides leadership to the Administration in accordance with the House's standards and values.
- Prepares the Administration's strategic plan, business plans, financial plans, annual estimates and annual report for approval by the House of Lords Commission.
- Manages the Administration with the resources agreed by the House of Lords Commission.
- Supports the Clerk of the Parliaments in the discharge of their functions as Accounting Officer and employer of the staff of the House.
- Advises the House of Lords Commission and other domestic committees of the House on issues which fall within their terms of reference.
- Assesses and manages risk, and maintains a transparent system of prudent and effective controls.
- Monitors the Administration's performance in achieving its objectives.
- Encourages the process of change in order to enhance the Administration's performance.

¹⁷ UK Parliament website, '[House of Lords: Liaison Committee](#)', accessed 4 May 2017.

¹⁸ In the House of Commons the equivalent body is the House of Commons Executive Committee. This is a sub-committee of the House of Commons Commission, which is chaired by the Director General of the House of Commons.

The Clerk of the Parliaments chairs the Board. The other members of the Board include the directors of key functions in the House of Lords and are listed below:

- The Clerk Assistant (Parliamentary Services)
- The Reading Clerk (Corporate Services)
- Finance Director (Financial Resources)
- Director of Human Resources (Human Resources)
- Director of Facilities (Support Services)
- Director of the Parliamentary Digital Service (Digital Services)
- An external member (in attendance)

The Board meets regularly during the year, usually twice a month, and also meets jointly with the House of Commons Board twice a year. Further details of the work of the Management Board, including minutes, agendas and attendance, are published on the UK Parliament website.¹⁹

Management Sub-boards and Groups

The Management Board has delegated some responsibility to a number of sub-boards and groups, the majority of which are bicameral. They are listed below and their terms of reference are reproduced in Appendix 2 of this Library Note:

- Joint Investment Board [bicameral]
- Digital Strategy Board [bicameral]
- Information Authority [bicameral]
- Parliamentary Safety Assurance Board [bicameral]
- Business Resilience Group [bicameral]
- Business Planning Group [House of Lords]

Administration

The core task of the House of Lords Administration is to support the work of the House and its committees, and to support Members in their parliamentary work.²⁰ To do this the Administration employs approximately 500 staff across a number of departments and offices, which are described below. The staff of the Administration: are employed by the Clerk of the Parliaments; are not civil servants; serve the House rather than the Government; and are politically impartial.

Clerk of the Parliaments' Office

The Office supports the Clerk of the Parliaments in carrying out their duties as head of the Administration (including as chief procedural adviser, Chairman of the Management Board, Accounting Officer, Corporate Officer and Data Controller), and the Lord Speaker, Senior Deputy Speaker, Panel of Deputy Speakers and Chairmen and the Convenor of Crossbench Peers, in carrying out their functions inside and outside the Chamber. The Office also provides

¹⁹ UK Parliament website, '[House of Lords: Management Board](#)', accessed on 4 May 2017.

²⁰ In the House of Commons the equivalent body is the House of Commons Service.

administrative support for the Audit Committee, the domestic committees, and the Management Board, and is responsible for communications and information compliance matters.

The Clerk of the Parliaments' Office also encompasses the Lord Speaker's Office (including administrative support for the House of Lords Commission) and the Overseas Office, which facilitates contacts between the House and overseas parliaments and international assemblies, and provides advice and support to Members, including the Lord Speaker, when they attend conferences overseas. The Reading Clerk is responsible for overseeing these offices, as well as Communications and the Parliamentary Archives (a shared service) and the provision of a number of corporate services, including the internal audit function, business planning, and the performance and risk management frameworks.

Parliamentary Services

Parliamentary Services is a grouping of five offices that support the Chamber work of the House, overseen by the Clerk Assistant:

- The **Committee Office** supports the select committees of the House with procedural and legal advice and the administrative support necessary to fulfil the committees' orders of reference. Apart from the Liaison Committee, it does not support the domestic committees or those concerned solely with legislation and procedure.
- The **Journal Office** comprises the Registry, the Table Office and the Printed Paper Office. The Registry maintains records of the membership and business of the House and compiles the Journals of the House (the authoritative record of proceedings). The Table Office advises Members on the tabling of parliamentary business and produces the *House of Lords Business* document, including the Minutes of Proceedings. The Printed Paper Office is responsible for producing and providing documents required by Members of the House to discharge their parliamentary functions. The Office supports the Senior Deputy Speaker, Registrar of Lords Interests, the House of Lords Commissioner for Standards and the work of the Committee for Privileges and Conduct and Procedure Committee.²¹
- The **Legislation Office** supports the consideration and passage of primary public and private legislation, as well as secondary legislation, through the House; authorises, on behalf of the Clerk of the Parliaments, the publication of bills and amendments, Acts of Parliament and Measures and the transmission of official messages to the House of Commons; and supports the work of the Delegated Powers and Regulatory Reform Committee, the Secondary Legislation Scrutiny Committee and the Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments.
- The **Official Report (Hansard)** provides overnight a substantially verbatim record of proceedings in the Chamber and Grand Committee as well as Written Answers and Written Ministerial Statements; transcripts of Select Committee evidence sessions are also produced.
- The **Library** provides research, information and bibliographic services that support the parliamentary functions of the House.

²¹ These functions are concerned with procedural matters and are therefore not covered by this Library Note.

Black Rod's Department

The Department is responsible for controlling access to the Chamber and the precincts of the House (including booking in Members' guests to the Galleries and Below Bar) and maintaining order within them; organising all ceremonial occasions in the House and State Ceremonial events within the Palace of Westminster; and for the daily administration of the Queen's residual estate at Westminster.

Department of Facilities

The Department includes two offices:

- **Property and Office Services (POS)** manages the provision of accommodation (including the booking of committee and meeting rooms) and works services (including cleaning, mail, photocopying and stationery) to Members and staff. POS plans, supervises and controls works, maintenance and conservation projects and budgets across the Lords part of the parliamentary estate in conjunction with the Managing Directors of Strategic Estates and In-house Services (including the Parliamentary Maintenance Team) in the House of Commons.
- **Catering and Retail Services (CRS)** is responsible for the provision of catering services (including restaurants, cafés and bars) to Members and their guests, and to staff, and a gift shop for Members, staff and guests. It also provides a private banqueting service to Members.

Human Resources Office

The Office provides a personnel service for the Administration's staff (ie not Members' staff) and is responsible for the recruitment of staff, maintenance of the pay and grading systems and other conditions of service, pay negotiation and authorisation, diversity and inclusion, training, superannuation, performance management and grievance and disciplinary matters.

Finance Department

The Department is responsible for providing accounting and financial services to the House, including: financial management and administration; financial reporting; resource and cash management; payments to Members, suppliers and staff; and accounting for receipts from Members, staff and the public. The Department includes the Parliamentary Procurement and Commercial Service, a shared service (see below).

Shared Services and Joint Departments

A number of shared services are provided by one House on behalf of both, while a joint department provides ICT services. The most significant ones are described below. The *Strategy for the House of Lords Administration 2016–21*, which was endorsed by the House of Lords Commission in December 2016, contains a strategic commitment to “Improve the governance and provision of shared and joint services across Parliament, reducing barriers and amalgamating services when doing so delivers better value and does not compromise the

House's objectives or voice".²² In response to a suggestion by the Clerk of the Parliaments, the House of Commons Governance Committee recommended that a review of shared services should be conducted.²³ The first stage of the review, which considered the operation of, and further opportunities for, joint services, concluded in September 2015. It concluded that there was the potential for more efficiency, less bureaucracy and increased opportunities for staff through further joint working in some areas. In response the House of Commons Commission and the then House of Lords House Committee agreed the scope of further work, which continued in 2016–17.

Strategic Estates

The Palace of Westminster is a Royal Palace and is under the joint stewardship of the House of Lords and the House of Commons. Responsibility for the long-term preservation and development of the buildings and services that constitute the Parliamentary estate is a shared service, hosted by the House of Commons and provided by the Strategic Estates team (led by the Managing Director of Strategic Estates). Expenditure on the Palace and the parliamentary estate is split between the Lords and Commons on a 40:60 ratio, or solely allocated to either House where appropriate.

Parliamentary Digital Service

On 1 April 2015 Parliamentary Digital Service (PDS) came into being, it brought together the management of all online and ICT services, including both ICT services currently managed by the Parliamentary ICT service and web services which were previously managed by the Web and Intranet Service (a shared service hosted by the House of Commons), into a single organisation. A Director was appointed in March 2015 to run PDS, who will be publicly accountable for delivering measurably rising levels of satisfaction with Parliament's digital services from Member's staff and the public. PDS is a joint department of both Houses under the Parliament (Joint Departments) Act 2007 (see section 3.1 of this Library Note).²⁴ Each House pays for its own ICT hardware and House-specific software, and the costs of PDS itself are split between the Lords and Commons on a 30:70 ratio. Joint ICT development project costs are shared on a basis agreed project by project.

Parliamentary Security Department

The Director of Security for Parliament (DSP) has strategic responsibilities for physical, personnel and cyber security across the parliamentary estate. On 29 January 2016 responsibility for the day-to-day delivery of physical and personnel operational security transferred from the Serjeant at Arms (House of Commons) and Black Rod to the new Parliamentary Security Department (PSD), which is a shared service hosted by the House of Commons. The DSP is subject to the overall political direction of, and accountable to, the Speakers of the two Houses, and is line-managed by the Clerks of both Houses. They chair the bicameral Parliamentary Security Board (composed of officials), are a member of the House of Commons Board and have a right of attendance at the House of Lords Management Board. They are also responsible for the management of the Commons and Lords security budgets, including the Special Services Agreement with the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) ('the Police Contract').

²² House of Lords, [Strategy for the House of Lords Administration 2016–21](#), 2017.

²³ House of Commons Governance Committee, [House of Commons Governance](#), 17 December 2014, HC 692 of session 2014–15.

²⁴ House of Lords House Committee, [Establishment of PICT](#), 6 December 2007, HL Paper 20 of session 2007–08.

A new Police Contract commenced on 1 April 2016 and the MPS civilian workforce transferred to become PSD staff on the same date. Costs are split between the Lords and Commons on a 30:70 ratio.

Parliamentary Procurement and Commercial Service

The Clerks of the two Houses agreed in July 2013 to establish a unified parliamentary procurement function. The Parliamentary Procurement and Commercial Service, which launched on 1 April 2014, provides a procurement and contract management support service for both Houses, and is hosted by the House of Lords. The relevant costs are split between the Lords and Commons on a 30:70 ratio.

Parliamentary Archives

Parliamentary Archives is a shared service, hosted by the House of Lords, which provides an archive and records management service for both Houses, answers enquiries about the archives and history of Parliament and makes records accessible to Members and the public in the search room. Outreach activities also aim to enhance public awareness of the historical and informational value of the archives as a core resource of Parliament. Costs are split between the Lords and Commons on a 60:40 ratio.

Other Shared Services

A number of other shared services are provided by the House of Commons:

- The **Parliamentary Enterprise Portfolio Management Office** provides central support for professional programme and project management activity in Parliament.
- The **Broadcasting Unit** oversees the production and distribution of the audio-visual record and the broadcasting and webcasting of both Houses, operates the annunciator service and provides an audio-visual archive service.
- The **Parliamentary Maintenance Services Team** is responsible for providing engineers control, area technicians, craft team, furniture and furnishings, and programming and planning services, in both Houses.
- The **Occupational Health and Wellbeing** and **Environment** teams provide advisory and support services to Members and staff of both Houses.
- The **Logistics** team is responsible for the contract under which the Off Site Consolidation Centre is provided for Parliament, as well as the Mail and Late Night Transport contracts.
- The **Outreach and Engagement Service, Education Service and Visitor Services** teams provide support to Parliament to increase public engagement, including commercial tours and support for schools and young people.
- The **Curator's Office** is responsible for conserving, developing and displaying the works of art collections of both Houses.
- The **Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST)** provides publications and advice on all matters regarding science and technology for both Houses, including to select committees. Three members of the House of Lords sit on the POST Board.

3. Changes to the Governance and Administration of the House of Lords

3.1 Legislation

Clerk of the Parliaments Act 1824

The Act sets out that the Clerk of the Parliaments shall be appointed by the Crown and shall be removable by the Crown upon an address of the House of Lords for that purpose. It also sets out how the other Table Clerks shall be appointed and the Clerk of the Parliaments' role as employer of the other staff of the House.²⁵

Parliamentary Corporate Bodies Act 1992

The Act designates the Clerk of the House of Commons and the Clerk of the Parliaments as Corporate Officers, making them responsible for signing contracts and holding property on behalf of their respective Houses.²⁶

Parliament (Joint Departments) Act 2007

The Act provides the Corporate Officers of both Houses with the power to establish joint departments, subject to the approval of the House of Commons Commission and the House of Lords on the recommendation of the House Committee.²⁷ The Act was passed to allow the formal establishment of the Parliamentary ICT Service (PICT)²⁸ as a joint department but also allows the establishment of other joint departments without further legislation. The Act provides that the Corporate Officers' functions in connection with joint departments are exercisable by them only jointly, including the appointment of staff.

3.2 Reviews

Pre-1991–92

The Select Committee on the House of Lords' Offices ('the Offices Committee') was established shortly after the Clerk of the Parliaments Act 1824.²⁹ From the end of the 19th century the Offices Committee was appointed at the beginning of each session in order to supervise appointments and conditions of employment in the two "offices" of the Clerk of the Parliaments and Black Rod.³⁰ It subsequently acquired a wide range of responsibilities. Before the 1991–92 reforms the Offices Committee had up to 60 Members or more and latterly appointed seven sub-committees on: the Library; Refreshments; Works of Art; Computers; Staff of the House; Finance; and Administration.

²⁵ Clerk of the Parliaments Act 1824.

²⁶ Parliamentary Corporate Bodies Act 1992.

²⁷ Parliament (Joint Appointments) Act 2007.

²⁸ The PICT department, was subsumed within the Parliamentary Digital Service.

²⁹ Until 1889 it was called the Select Committee on the Office of the Clerk of the Parliaments and Office of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod.

³⁰ At that stage the only two offices in the House Administration.

Until 25 April 1965 the entire Palace of Westminster, as a Royal Palace, had been under the immediate control of the Crown, on whose behalf the Lord Great Chamberlain acted. Thereafter the Queen made over to each House the control, use and occupation of the part of the Palace which it occupied, but responsibility for the Royal Apartments of the Palace, including the Robing Room and the Royal Gallery, remained with the Lord Great Chamberlain, as did certain ceremonial functions. Responsibility for the Lords was vested in the Lord Chancellor on behalf of the House, in his role as Speaker. In turn he delegated his authority in this regard to the Offices Committee, with Black Rod acting as its agent. Under these arrangements the Minister of Public Building and Works remained responsible to Parliament for the maintenance of fabric of the Palace, as well as the provision of “furnishing, fuel and light”. The Minister also continued to be responsible for the management of Westminster Hall and the Crypt Chapel, the control of which was vested jointly in the Lord Great Chamberlain and in the two Speakers, on behalf of both Houses.³¹

In 1992 both Houses assumed control of all parliamentary expenditure, as well as responsibility for the maintenance of the fabric of the Palace, which had become the responsibility of the Property Services Agency (a government agency). Black Rod assumed responsibility for the latter function in the House of Lords before it was transferred to the Director of Facilities in 2009 (see below).

1991–92 Reforms

The domestic committee structure in the House of Lords was reconfigured in 1991–92 in the wake of changes to the House of Commons’ administration following the Ibbs Review.³² Responsibility for the delivery of services and general administration remained with the Offices Committee, but its seven sub-committees were reduced to four—Finance and Staff, Administration and Works, Library and Computers, and Refreshment—and an Advisory Panel on Works of Art was established. The sub-committees were given delegated responsibility for decision-making, though they could not report directly to the House and lacked formal terms of reference. In practice, the changes meant that the Offices Committee became a ‘post-box’, receiving reports from the sub-committees and then reporting them to the House when considered necessary. At this stage the Offices Committee had reduced to 28 members and it met infrequently with very short meetings. There was much overlap between the members of the Offices Committee and the sub-committees, as well as the items of business they considered and deliberated upon. During the same period changes were also made to the financial management arrangements in the House of Lords, following similar changes in the House of Commons.

2000–02 Reforms

On 21 June 2000 the House considered a report by the Offices Committee, which included a recommendation to appoint a management consultant, Mr Michael Braithwaite, to undertake a review of the House of Lords.³³ The report recommended that the review should cover the Administration’s management framework as well as the structure for taking decisions about the services of the House and other domestic matters following the 1991 to 92 reforms.³⁴ After a

³¹ [HL Hansard, 23 March 1965, cols 524–9.](#)

³² House of Commons Commission, *Report on House of Commons Services*, HC 38 of session 1990–91.

³³ Mr Braithwaite had undertaken a review of the House of Commons Administration in 1999. See: House of Commons Commission, *Review of Management and Services*, 26 July 1999, HC 745 1998–99.

³⁴ House of Lords Offices Committee, *Fifth Report*, 25 May 2000, HL Paper 70 of session 1999–2000.

short debate, during which some Members opposed the appointment of a management consultant, the then Chairman of Committees withdrew the motion to approve the report.³⁵ On 19 July 2000 the Offices Committee made a revised but similar recommendation in another report, which proposed that a steering group of Members would be convened to supervise the review.³⁶ The House debated the report on 27 July 2000; and although it was agreed that a review would be undertaken, the House deleted the reference to it being conducted by Mr Braithwaite.³⁷

A steering group was duly established in September 2000, chaired by Lord Grenfell, which reported to the Chairman of Committees, Lord MacKay of Ardbrecknish, on 5 March 2001.³⁸ It decided not to appoint a consultant and recommended the absorption of the responsibilities of the Finance and Staff and Administration and Works sub-committees into a “slimmed down” Offices Committee, which would meet more regularly and operate in a more transparent manner. It also recommended the appointment of a full-time professionally qualified Principal Financial Officer to be explicitly responsible for financial management and reporting to the Clerk of the Parliaments as Accounting Officer.

A working group was announced on 1 November 2001 to develop the steering group’s work further. Chaired by Lord Tordoff (who had succeeded Lord MacKay as Chairman of Committees), it reported to the Offices Committee on 12 February 2002.³⁹

This report was republished by the Offices Committee on 16 May 2002 and recommended, among other things:

- The establishment of a House Committee in place of the Offices Committee, to meet once a month in order to provide leadership and strategic planning for the administration, domestic committees and staff. The Committee would have a membership of eleven, including the Chairman of Committees (as the chair), the Leaders of the three major parties (with the Chief Whips acting as alternates), the Convenor of the Crossbench Peers (or a nominated alternate) and six backbench Members (two each from the Labour and Conservative parties, and one each from the Liberal Democrats and the Crossbench Peers), with the backbench Members appointed for a whole Parliament to act as the principal representatives of the membership of the House as a whole.⁴⁰ It suggested that the House Committee would make routine reports to the House for information, with occasional reports for agreement.
- The establishment of a Management Board to bring the various functions of the Administration together and to develop a sense of corporate identity, chaired by

³⁵ [HL Hansard, 21 June 2000, cols 256–65.](#)

³⁶ House of Lords Offices Committee, [Sixth Report](#), 24 July 2000, HL Paper 97 of session 1999–2000.

³⁷ [HL Hansard, 27 July 2000, cols 604–35.](#)

³⁸ [Report by the Steering Group on Management and Services in the House of Lords](#), 24 July 2001, HL Paper 22 of session 2001–02. The other members of the group were Lord Levene of Portsoken, Lord Newton of Braintree and Lord Oakeshott of Seagrove Bay.

³⁹ House of Lords Offices Committee, [Report by the Working Group on Management and Services](#), 15 February 2002, HL Paper 79 of session 2001–02. The other Members of the group were Lord Grenfell, Lord Hunt of Wirral, Lord Sharman and Viscount Tenby.

⁴⁰ The steering group recommended only four back-bench members but this was increased to six when the Offices Committee agreed an amendment to this effect proposed by Lord Strathclyde when the report was agreed. The total membership increased to twelve in 2006 following the creation of the Lord Speaker, who became House Committee Chairman.

the Clerk of the Parliaments. The Board would advise the House Committee and assist it in preparing the strategic plan, before formulating a business plan for its implementation. Decisions on staff numbers and grading would be formally delegated to the Board.

- The establishment of an Audit Committee, whose membership would not overlap with the House Committee or the domestic committees, chaired by a Member and including two external Members.
- The reconstitution of the Offices Committee's sub-committees, including the Advisory Panel on Works of Art, as four free-standing select committees with minimal overlaps in membership. The committees would act as 'user groups' to canvass the views of Members in a transparent manner to allow them more opportunity to influence decision-making. They would have the ability to make policy recommendations and executive decisions within defined financial thresholds, and would report directly to the House. The Finance and Staff sub-committee would be abolished and its main responsibilities transferred to the House Committee, while the Library and Computers sub-committee would be renamed as the Information Committee, alongside a reconstituted Administration and Works Committee and Refreshment Committee.
- A strengthened Office of the Clerk of the Parliaments, with a requisite increase in resources to support the new arrangements. Support was also expressed for the appointment of a full-time Principal Financial Officer.⁴¹

It was expected that the establishment of the House Committee would allow the House of Lords to better assert itself in relation to the House of Commons regarding matters such as accommodation, as well as increasing its capability to formulate strategies relating to the provision of joint services. The working group also remarked that, owing to the uncertainty occasioned by possible Lords reform, a full external review of management structures should be commissioned within a reasonable period from the time any reforms came into effect. The House debated and agreed the report on 10 June 2002,⁴² and most of the recommended changes took effect at the beginning of the 2002–03 session.

Tordoff/Hunt Report on Internal Governance (2007)

On 12 June 2007 the then House Committee considered the internal governance of the House of Lords on the basis of a paper by the then Clerk of the Parliaments and an external review of the Management Board, which had been conducted by Sir John Parker.⁴³ Two members of the House Committee, Lord Hunt of Wirral and Lord Tordoff, were asked to prepare a paper on the internal governance in the House of Lords in the light of the Parker Review and the Tebbit Review in the House of Commons.⁴⁴ The report was presented to the Lord Speaker and agreed by the House Committee in November 2007. It concluded that the governance arrangements put in place in between 2000 and 2002 needed only incremental change and recommended:

- Changes to the terms of reference of the House Committee to better reflect its non-executive role with respect to the Management Board, its function in setting

⁴¹ House of Lords Offices Committee, *Fifth Report*, 16 May 2002, HL Paper 105 of session 2001–02.

⁴² *HL Hansard*, 10 June 2002, cols 12–16.

⁴³ House of Lords Administration, *Review of the Management Board of the House of Lords*, April 2007.

⁴⁴ House of Commons Commission, *Review of Management and Services of the House of Commons*, 25 June 2007, HC 685 of session 2006–07.

strategic direction, and its role in supervising arrangements relating to Members' expenses.

- Changes to the terms of reference of domestic committees to clarify their need to operate within the strategic framework set by the House Committee.
- Better communication among the committees and between the committees and Members, as well as consideration as to how to improve their respective working practices.
- Reducing the number of backbench Members on the House Committee from six members to four (this recommendation was not implemented).

A report by the House Committee, which set out the proposed changes to the domestic committees' terms of reference,⁴⁵ was agreed by the House without debate on 5 December 2007.⁴⁶

Senior Management Restructure (2008)

A report published by the then House Committee on 14 March 2008 considered proposals for the appointment of a new post of Director of Facilities, to allow the post of Black Rod to focus on the traditional aspects of the role.⁴⁷ The report recommended, among other things, that the new Director of Facilities would have responsibility for works, accommodation, facilities and services, and would also become the Management Board member responsible for the then Refreshment Department.⁴⁸ The House agreed these recommendations on 31 March 2008,⁴⁹ and they took effect following the retirement of Sir Michael Willcocks as Black Rod in May 2009.

Thomas/Makower Review (2011)

Mike Thomas, a management consultant, and Andrew Makower, then Principal Clerk of Select Committees, conducted a 'light touch' review of "the structure of the House of Lords Administration and the operation of the Management Board", which concluded in March 2011.⁵⁰ The report made recommendations for streamlining the House of Lords Administration so as to improve the service provided to Members and reduce bureaucracy. The following recommendations were accepted and implemented:

- The administration of the House of Lords to become known as the 'House of Lords Administration'.
- The merger of the Delegated Legislation Office with the Public and Private Bill Office into a new Legislation Office headed by a 'Clerk of Legislation' (previously the head of the Public and Private Bill Office).
- The transfer of the supply functions of the Printed Paper Office (office supplies, including photocopiers and pre-paid envelopes) to the Department of Facilities. The

⁴⁵ House of Lords House Committee, [Domestic Committees' Terms of Reference](#), 29 November 2007, HL Paper 13 of session 2007–08.

⁴⁶ [HL Hansard, 5 December 2007, col 1702](#).

⁴⁷ House of Lords House Committee, [Senior Management Restructure](#), 14 March 2008, HL Paper 78 of session 2007–08.

⁴⁸ This is now known as Catering and Retail Services.

⁴⁹ [HL Hansard, 31 March 2008, cols 725–8](#).

⁵⁰ House of Lords Administration, [Report of a Review of the Structure of the House of Lords Administration and the Operation of the Management Board](#), 11 March 2011.

remainder of the office, alongside the Table Office, was brought within the Journal Office.

- That, on a trial basis, an external member of the Audit Committee should attend Management Board meetings.
- The adoption of formal Service Level Agreements with the House of Commons in respect of the Parliamentary Estates Directorate, and with Parliamentary ICT Service.

The report also made the following recommendations, which were not implemented:

- The appointment of a professionally qualified Finance Director or Head of Corporate Services.
- Using the new performance measurement system to enable the Board to track implementation of its priorities and to improve its oversight of major programmes and projects.
- The appointment of a senior member of staff with a wide brief to run the Clerk of the Parliaments' Office and support the Clerk, along similar lines to the Head of the Office of the Chief Executive in the House of Commons.

Leader's Group on Governance (2015–16)

In March 2015 the then Leader of the House, Baroness Stowell of Beeston, set up a Group to consider what arrangements were necessary to ensure that domestic committee decision-making was effective, transparent and accountable. In particular, the Group was asked to:

[E]xamine domestic committee decision-making structures, including which decisions go to which committee, or are referred between committees, and which decisions are remitted to the House; and consider what arrangements are necessary to uphold the interest of the House of Lords as an equal partner when making decisions alongside, or sharing services with, the House of Commons.⁵¹

The report of the Leader's Group on Governance, which was chaired by Baroness Shephard of Northwold (Conservative), was published in January 2016.⁵² In its recommendations, the Group's stated aim was to achieve clarity of remits for the domestic committees, and clarity of roles for committee members. It proposed a smaller number of committees with clear demarcations of responsibility and a clear hierarchy. Its vision was for a small cadre of Members with the time, interest and expertise necessary to engage with domestic committee matters on behalf of the House, in partnership with the staff. To give effect to this vision it recommended:

- A senior committee to set the strategy of the House and the Administration and to monitor the performance of the Administration against agreed targets. It also recommended that the membership of the senior committee should include two external non-executive members.
- Two supporting committees, one dealing with all aspects of services for members, to be called the 'Services Committee', and a Finance Committee, each with clearly defined terms of reference agreed by the senior committee.

⁵¹ House of Lords, '[Written Statement: Leader's Group on Governance](#)', 23 March 2015, HLWS425

⁵² Leader's Group on Governance, '[Governance of Domestic Committees in the House of Lords](#)', 13 January 2016, HL Paper 81 of session 2015–16.

- Appropriate delegations from the senior committee to the Services Committee; and from the Services Committee to its Chair and to the Management Board.
- Two new posts: a chair for each of the Services Committee and the Finance Committee, and a new role entitled Senior Deputy Speaker, to replace the Chairman of Committees.
- The reconfiguration of the Works of Art Committee as an advisory panel, reporting to the Lord Speaker.
- The membership of the domestic committee, including nomination criteria, length of service and induction arrangements.
- The planning for routine and effective communication with the House as a matter of utmost importance; and to ensure that the format of all their meetings encouraged a sense of shared purpose and partnership.
- That the new Senior Deputy Speaker and new chairmen of the Services Committee and the Finance Committee should be nominated by party groups, following a process of selection; have job descriptions and agreed terms of office; and work closely with the Lord Speaker to ensure the effective governance of the House.
- Regular joint meetings between the senior committee and the Management Board, and the agreement of a detailed memorandum of understanding between the senior committee and the Management Board to specify what matters are delegated to the Management Board, and what matters require endorsement from the senior committee.
- That the new domestic committees explore the appetite among their Commons counterparts for regular joint meetings at which issues of common concern could be discussed and decided.

The then Leader of the House subsequently led discussions on the implementation of the Group's recommendations, and a debate took place on 9 May 2016.⁵³ Following the debate the then House Committee published a report regarding the implementation of the Leader's Group recommendations on 6 July 2016,⁵⁴ which set out the following:

- The terms of reference and membership of the House of Lords Commission, including the role and powers of the external members.
- The terms of reference and membership of the Services Committee and Finance Committee.
- That the Services Committee and Finance Committee would be responsible for agreeing their working practices, taking their lead from the Commission, including how they would communicate with the House and members, and work with the House of Commons.
- That the Commission would be responsible for agreeing delegations to the Services Committee, Finance Committee and the Management Board.
- That the Audit Committee should not be formally appointed as a sub-committee of the Commission (as proposed by the Leader's Group report) in order to allow for one of the Committee's external members to be appointed as chairman of the Committee and, in turn, to serve on the Commission, rather than on the Finance Committee, as also recommended by the Group.⁵⁵

⁵³ [HL Hansard, 9 May 2016, col. 1573.](#)

⁵⁴ House Committee, [Implementing the Recommendations of the Leader's Group on Governance](#), 6 July 2016, HL Paper 19 of session 2016–17.

⁵⁵ The reports states that the reason for these changes was to raise the profile of the audit function and reflect governance best practice.

- The role of the new Lord Speaker’s Advisory Panel on Works of Art.
- The new position of the Senior Deputy Speaker.

The governance changes were agreed by the House on 21 July 2016⁵⁶ and took effect on 1 September, at the same time as the new Lord Speaker and Senior Deputy Speaker assumed office.

4. Budget of the House of Lords

The House of Lords, in common with government departments, derives its funding from the House of Commons (‘Supply’) within a formal system of financial control administered by the Treasury. The House’s use of resources is thus subject to formal oversight by the Treasury and the House of Commons, though as a Chamber of Parliament with common dependencies and programmes with the House of Commons, the House of Lords occupies a special position, recognised by the Treasury, under which it is in practice not subject to the strict disciplines of government financial management. Nor is it explicitly subject to some of the legal requirements which are imposed on departments and departmental bodies. Nevertheless, the House seeks to comply with the principles of financial management and control applicable to government departments. The House’s use of resources is also subject to scrutiny and control similar to that of government departments.

The House has also elected to have its accounts audited by the National Audit Office. The Clerk of the Parliaments, who is appointed *ex officio* as Accounting Officer, is in principle accountable to the House of Commons, through the Public Accounts Committee, for the regularity and propriety of expenditure in the House of Lords.

In 2017/18 the House of Lords will have a resource budget of £113 million and a capital budget of £55 million.

In December 2016, the House of Lords Commission agreed a financial remit to “adhere to the savings target of not increasing the resource budget in real terms (compared with 2010/11), subject to the need to maintain the ability of the House and its Members to carry out their parliamentary functions in changing circumstances including increased attendance, and subject to exceptional adjustments reflecting property revaluations”. The *Strategy for the House of Lords Administration 2016–21* also includes a strategic commitment to “continuously improve value for money”.⁵⁷ As at the end of 2016/17 the House had reduced its resource budget by 7 percent in real terms since 2010/11.

5. Senior Appointments

Clerk of the Parliaments

The Clerk of the Parliaments has a salary aligned to the Judicial Group 4 pay scale (the same level as a High Court Judge).

⁵⁶ [HL Hansard, 21 July 2016, cols 737–46.](#)

⁵⁷ House of Lords, [Strategy for the House of Lords Administration 2016–21](#), 2017.

Erskine May sets out the appointment procedure and responsibilities of the role:

The Clerk of the Parliaments is the head of the House Administration, consisting of the permanent staff of the House. He is *ex officio* Chairman of the Management Board, and is in effect the House's 'Chief Executive'. Under the Parliamentary Corporate Bodies Act 1992 (c 27) the Clerk of the Parliaments is a corporation sole known as the Corporate Officer of the House of Lords. As such he is empowered to acquire, hold, manage and dispose of land and other property for any purpose of the House of Lords, and to enter into contracts for that purpose. The Clerk of the Parliaments employs all the staff in administrative departments of the House. Clerks are appointed by the Clerk of the Parliaments and are removable by him. He has responsibilities in relation to freedom of information. The Clerk of the Parliaments sits with the House Committee and the other domestic committees.

The Clerk of the Parliaments is appointed by the Crown by letters patent under the Great Seal. He must exercise his duties in person, and he can be removed from office only by the Sovereign upon an Address of the House of Lords for that purpose.

The Clerk makes a declaration at the Table of the House upon entering office 'to make true entries and records of the things done and passed' in the Parliaments and to 'keep secret all such matters as shall be treated therein and not to disclose the same before they shall be published but to such as it ought to be disclosed unto'.

The Minutes of Proceedings of the House are prepared under his direction and issued in his name, and in the House he is responsible for calling each item of the day's business. He gives advice to Members of the House on order and procedure. He has the custody of the manuscripts and printed records stored in the Victoria Tower. He signs all orders of the House and other official communications. He endorses all bills sent to the Commons. In his custody also are placed bills which have passed through both Houses and await the Royal Assent and he is responsible for the preparation of the texts of Acts of Parliament. At the ceremony of the Royal Assent to bills by commission, he pronounces to each Act the words by which the Royal Assent is signified, and it is his duty by statute to endorse on every Act the date on which it received the Royal Assent.⁵⁸

The Clerk of the Parliaments is expected to provide authoritative advice on procedural matters on a daily basis to the Lord Speaker, the Leader of the House and other members of the front benches, the Senior Deputy Speaker, the Panel of Deputy Speakers and Chairmen, and individual Members. He sits for part of each sitting day in the Chamber of the House, announces the business of the House and participates in certain ceremonial occasions. The Clerk of the Parliaments is returning officer for elections within the House in connection with the Speakership and hereditary Members of the House. The Clerk of the Parliaments is the Accounting Officer for the House of Lords (see above) and, as the Responsible Person under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order) Order 2005, has ultimate responsibility for fire safety management on the Lords part of the parliamentary estate. He is also the data controller for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 1998.

⁵⁸ Erskine May, *Parliamentary Practice*, 2011, 24th ed, p 115. For more background, see: Maurice F Bond, 'The Office of Clerk of the Parliaments', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 1958, vol 12 no 3, pp 297–310.

The position originated towards the end of the 13th Century in the reign of Edward I. The plural term ‘Clerk of the Parliaments’ came into existence in Henry VIII’s reign and signifies that the Clerk of the Parliaments serves from one Parliament to the next. The Clerk of the House of Commons emerged as a distinct position during the 14th Century and incumbents are still formally known as the ‘Under-clerk of the Parliaments’.

The Clerk of the Parliaments issues letters of delegation to the other members of the Management Board setting out their roles and responsibilities, and they also receive an annual budget letter from the Finance Director. At the end of the financial year the Board members submit second-tier governance statements to the Clerk of the Parliaments setting out how they have ensured the effective and efficient management of the responsibilities delegated to them and their departments or offices by the Clerk of the Parliaments.

Edward Ollard is the 64th Clerk of the Parliaments and took office on 16 April 2017. He took his oath of office on 24 April 2017.⁵⁹

Clerk Assistant and Reading Clerk

Erskine May sets out the appointment procedure and responsibilities of the roles:

The Clerk Assistant and the Reading Clerk are appointed by the Lord Speaker, subject to the approbation of the House on their appointments being notified and, when appointed, they cannot be suspended or removed from their offices without an order of the House. They sit at the Table of the House on the right hand of the Clerk of the Parliaments and in general assist him in the performance of his duties.

The Clerk Assistant keeps the Minutes of Proceedings of the House and prepares House of Lords Business, containing the next day’s Order Paper and future business. The Minutes of Proceedings have been issued daily since 1825 and form the basis of the Lords Journals which are compiled from them subsequently. The Clerk Assistant exercises the functions of the Corporate Officer of the Lords during any vacancy in the office of Clerk of the Parliaments.

The Reading Clerk records the daily attendances, reads aloud the letters patent and writs of summons of newly created Peers on the occasion of their introduction and administers the oath. He also reads the commissions for Royal Assent and prorogation.

In addition to these invariable duties, the Clerk Assistant and the Reading Clerk undertake such other functions as the Clerk of the Parliaments assigns to them.

In performing their duties at the Table of the House, the Clerk of the Parliaments, Clerk Assistant and Reading Clerk are assisted by other senior Clerks who sit at the Table according to a rota.⁶⁰

The Clerk Assistant acts as the Clerk of the Parliaments’ deputy in the House and performs their House functions in their absence. In the event of a vacancy in the Office of Clerk of the

⁵⁹ [HL Hansard, 24 April 2017, col 1203.](#)

⁶⁰ Erskine May, *Parliamentary Practice*, 2011, 24th ed, pp 115–16.

Parliaments they would discharge the functions of the Corporate Officer under section 1(4) of the Parliamentary Corporate Bodies Act 1992. Within the Administration the Clerk Assistant is also responsible for Parliamentary Services. Simon Burton is the present Clerk Assistant and has been in post since April 2017.

Within the Administration the Reading Clerk is responsible for Corporate Services. Jake Vaughan is the current Reading Clerk and has been in post since April 2017. He is also the Clerk of the Overseas Office.

Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod and Serjeant-at-Arms

Erskine May sets out the appointment procedure and responsibilities of the role:

The Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod ('Black Rod') is appointed by the Crown by letters patent under the garter seal. He, or his deputy the Yeoman Usher, is on duty when the House is sitting, and acts as the Messenger of the Sovereign whenever the attendance of the Commons is required. He is responsible for the administrative arrangements whenever the Sovereign is in Parliament. He is responsible for security in the House of Lords area of the Palace of Westminster and the parliamentary estate, and reports to the Clerk of the Parliaments in respect of this function. Black Rod also acts as Secretary to the Lord Great Chamberlain and as such is responsible for certain ceremonial duties and arrangements including daily management of the Sovereign's residual estate in the Palace. He takes part in the introduction of a new Peer. By Standing Order 13 he is responsible for giving effect to such orders and rules as the House may make for the admission of the public to the Chamber and the precincts of the House. It is his duty to execute the orders of the House in cases of contempt.

Since 1971, Black Rod has also held the office of Serjeant-at-Arms, to which he is appointed by the Crown by letters patent under the Great Seal. In this capacity he attends the Lord Speaker.

The Yeoman Usher of the Black Rod and Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms acts as the Deputy of Black Rod for such of the above functions as Black Rod may assign to him. In particular he attends to the Lord Speaker in carrying the Mace in and out of the Chamber.⁶¹

The position originated in the mid-14th Century. Black Rod's former responsibility for security in the House of Lords was transferred to the Director of Security for Parliament at the beginning of 2016 (see above). Black Rod is also responsible for business resilience and continuity arrangements for the House; and the planning and conduct of ceremonial events for Royal and State occasions in the Palace of Westminster including personally summoning the Commons to the Lords to hear the Queen's Speech during the State Opening of Parliament. He appoints and controls the Doorkeepers of the House.

David Leakey, a former British military commander, took up office on 1 February 2011. On 7 November 2016 the Leader of the House, Baroness Evans of Bowes Park, notified the House that Her Majesty the Queen had approved the extension of David Leakey's appointment until

⁶¹ Erskine May, *Parliamentary Practice*, 2011, 24th ed, pp 116–17. For further historical background, see: Maurice Bond and David Beamish, *The Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod*, House of Lords Information Office, 1976; and *Select Committee on the Office of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod*, 1906, HL Paper 140.

31 January 2018.⁶² On 17 November 2017 Her Majesty the Queen approved the appointment of Sarah Clarke as the new Black Rod. She will formally take on the duties of Black Rod in early 2018.

Other Senior Appointments

The other members of the Management Board are appointed by the Clerk of the Parliaments and the present incumbents are as follows:

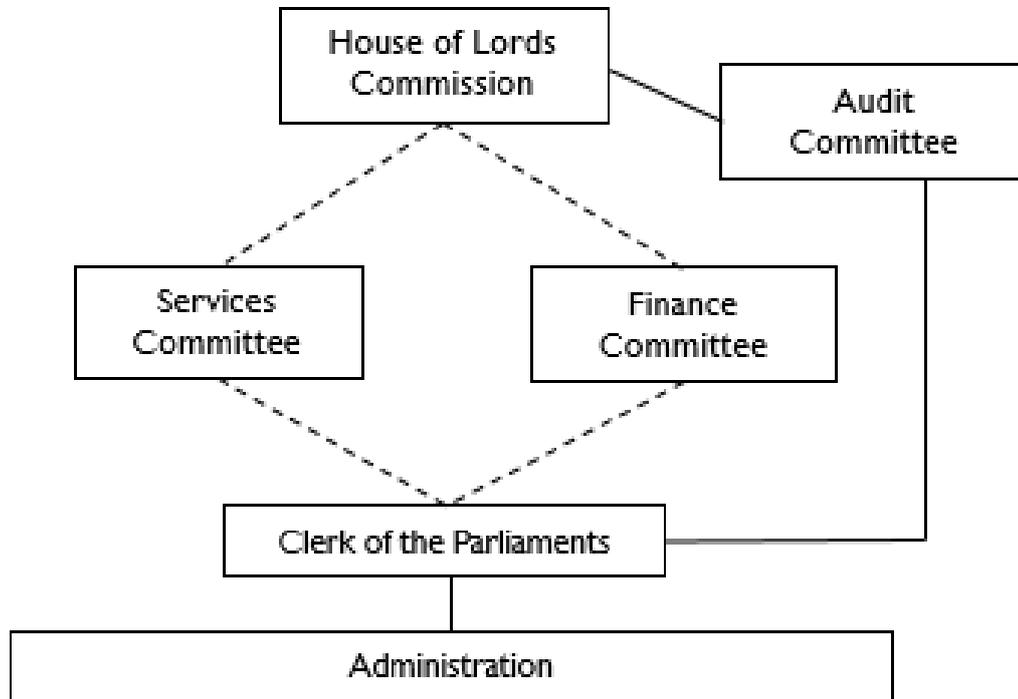
- Mostaque Ahmed, the Finance Director, is the head of the Finance Department.⁶³
- Nigel Sully, the Director of Human Resources, is the head of the Human Resources Office.⁶⁴
- Carl Woodall, the Director of Facilities, is a professional appointment and head of the Department of Facilities.
- Tracey Jessup is the Director of the Parliamentary Digital Service. This is a joint post appointed by the Clerks of both Houses.

⁶² House of Lords, [‘Written Statement: Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod’](#), 7 November 2016, HLWS240.

⁶³ Senior Clerks previously held this position but following a re-grading exercise it became a professionally qualified appointment.

⁶⁴ *ibid.*

Appendix I: House of Lords Organisation Chart



Appendix 2: Management Sub-boards and Groups

Joint Investment Board

The Joint Investment Board is a sub-committee of the House of Commons Executive Committee and the House of Lords Management Board, with the following remit:

- To develop the Medium Term Investment Plan through a yearly prioritisation exercise and make recommendations to the Executive Committee and Management Board.
- To consider dependencies and obtain assurances on capacity to deliver the investment plan.
- To obtain advice on the overall impact of change arising from the investment plan, including ongoing costs, savings and support.
- To ensure that all relevant Departments/Teams are consulted and contribute to the development of the investment plan.
- To communicate the plans to senior leaders across both Houses.
- To monitor delivery of major investment programmes against agreed baselines in terms of time, cost and benefits.
- To monitor risk and review investment portfolio risk registers.
- To adjust programme funding allocations in year as necessary, within the overall limits of the Investment Plan and in line with the Finance rules of both Houses.
- To review major business cases where appropriate and provide advice to the Finance Directors.
- To seek assurance on governance and delivery as appropriate through receiving reports from the Programme and Project Assurance team, Gateway Reviews (with the agreement of the SRO) and Internal Audit Reviews.
- To provide strategic direction to the programme and project management community across Parliament and sponsor professional development.
- To report major successes and concerns to the Executive Committee and Management Board.

Digital Strategy Board

The Digital Strategy Board is a sub-committee of the House of Commons Board and the House of Lords Management Board (the two Boards) and should:

- Support the work of the Digital Service, and its Director, in ensuring that digital delivery is at the forefront of Parliament's work, integrated into departmental business planning, and that user needs are prioritised; and in engaging others in achieving these aims.
- Support the Director in developing Parliament's digital strategy, subject to final approval by the two Boards, and in delivering the strategy.
- Agree the Digital Service's strategic performance measures and provide a forum for discussion of performance against those measures.
- Agree policies for Parliament's online services, including the website, intranet and social media, and support the Director in implementation.

- Review ICT/digital business cases, above a certain threshold, and provide advice to the Finance Directors on the issues they raise.

Information Authority

The Information Authority is a sub-committee of the House of Commons Board and the House of Lords Management Board (the two Boards). The Authority has delegated responsibility from, and is accountable to, the two Boards in respect of information management, security and assurance.

The Authority's strategic goal is to deliver increased benefits from parliamentary information for Members of both Houses, staff and the public, while containing the risk of inappropriate access both to that information and to other information held on systems for which the two Boards are responsible.

The Authority will deliver these benefits by ensuring that information can be found, accessed and shared appropriately and securely, and can be understood, used and trusted over time. In particular, the Authority collectively owns and makes decisions on matters of cyber security on behalf of the two Boards, including by taking Accreditation decisions and delivering penetration testing.

The Authority also provides a strategic focus for the development of a positive culture around the management of Parliamentary information, and a forum for coordinating the individual responsibilities of its members in the areas of its responsibility. The Authority will determine and publish its own strategic priorities within the context of the strategic goals and risk appetites of the two Houses.

Illustrative strategic priorities for the next two years, as agreed by the Authority, include:

- Successful delivery of improved cyber security, including through work coordinated through the cyber security programme, in particular by preparing and embedding across Parliament an effective and usable set of cyber security policies and developing enhanced threat monitoring capability.
- Developing an information management strategy.
- Developing a coordinated approach to the management of information risk in both Houses.
- Removing barriers to collaboration and information sharing within and beyond Parliament, where the benefits outweigh the risks.
- Delivering and embedding a revised parliamentary protective marking scheme, subject to the scheme's approval by the two Boards.
- Ensuring that effective information management and security principles and practices are observed in the delivery of key programmes and projects including Restoration and Renewal and Office365 rollout.
- Supporting the delivery of the Digital Strategy and in particular the provision of "Secure technology that works".
- Securing improvements in management reporting, including against agreed standards, to enable better prioritisation of activity and risk assurance.
- Preparing and delivering Parliament's response to the Information Management Assessment of both Houses carried out by the National Archives.

- Developing effective ways of working that balance the Authority's responsibilities for quality and risk management.

Parliamentary Safety Assurance Board

The Parliamentary Safety Assurance Board (PSAB) provides leadership and proactive strategic direction in relation to the management of safety, fire and food safety risks for both Houses. Its purpose is twofold:

1. To provide confirmation to the Boards of both Houses that:
 - safety management arrangements are established and are compatible with the strategic direction of both Houses;
 - these arrangements are integrated into our business processes; and
 - the resource needed to establish, implement, maintain and improve the safety management system is available.
2. To provide assurance to the Clerks of both Houses that:
 - their commitments in the Combined Safety Policy are being correctly discharged;
 - there are appropriate systems and processes in place to enable robust safety risk management; and
 - senior leaders are exercising due diligence and effective leadership on health and safety.

Business Resilience Group

The Business Resilience Group is a sub-committee of the House of Commons Board and House of Lords Management Board (the two Boards), and its objective is to:

- Act as an internal bicameral forum on behalf of the two Boards to provide strategic leadership on business resilience and monitor the effectiveness of arrangements for both Houses.
- Ensure that documented, tested and robust incident management and business continuity plans are in place to support the management of corporate business continuity risks in both Houses.
- Set the strategic direction for the Business Resilience Manager in developing, maintaining, exercising and promoting awareness of business continuity plans and the Incident Management Framework.
- Maintain coherence of contingency plans for the relocation of Parliament.
- Report and provide assurance to the Clerks of both Houses and the two Boards at least annually, to include response to internal audit and external audit of alignment to industry standards.

Business Planning Group

The terms of reference of the Business Planning Group, a sub-board of the House of Lords Management Board, as agreed by the Board in May 2015, are:

- To advise the Management Board on issues relating to business planning, risk management and corporate governance.
- To draft, for submission to the Board, the annual House business plan; to keep the House strategic plan under review; to keep the corporate risks under continuous review, with an annual review of the corporate risks as a whole; and to make recommendations thereon to the Board.
- To prepare guidance for offices on the content and format of office business plans and reports on performance.
- To sign off individual office business plans on behalf of the Board.
- To conduct an annual horizon-scanning exercise at the beginning of the annual business planning round, including the identification of 'black swan' risks, which can be characterised as extreme outliers with very low likelihood and very high impact. These will be reflected in the planning instructions issued to Heads of Offices.

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