



Issued by the
Board of Management
December 2006

House of Commons

Corporate Business Plan 2007



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



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Foreword



This is the House of Commons' fourth business plan and the first to be published since I became Clerk of the House and Chief Executive of the House Service on 1st October 2006.

In a rapidly changing business environment, we should not lose sight of our two key aims which are inextricably linked. The first is to provide the highest quality of service we can to the House and its Members. The second is to be a best employer to our staff and recognise how essential their wellbeing is to enable us to meet our first duty of serving the House.

There are a number of important developments ahead. We expect to conduct another user-survey of Members and their staff in spring 2007 – this will provide information about the progress that we have made since the 2003 survey and identify areas for further development. Better information and access for the public remains a priority. The new Visitor Reception Building, opening in early 2007, will provide a better welcome to all those coming to Parliament. The Website Redesign Project is now well underway and we expect the two Houses to decide whether to proceed with the construction of a Visitor and Information Centre in early 2007.

On the staff side I am delighted to read that the House-wide survey conducted in April 2006 revealed that about 90% of staff regard the House as a fairly or very good place to work in and were proud to work here. That is a remarkable tribute to the loyalty of staff in this organisation and it is something I consider to be of the utmost importance. The House has also succeeded in getting LiP re-accreditation since that survey and management is concerned to build upon the lessons that have emerged from the successful conclusion of that reappraisal, including better communication with staff and further career development planning.

Over the next few months the review of the Management of the House Service, under the leadership of Sir Kevin Tebbit KCB, former Permanent Secretary at the MoD, will offer an opportunity for further improving our corporate structure and our management techniques.

The Corporate Plan is important because it sets the strategic framework in which the Departments of the House operate and in which, in turn, each of you plays an important role. Please take some time to read it.

Malcolm Jack

Clerk of the House and Chief Executive



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1 Introduction



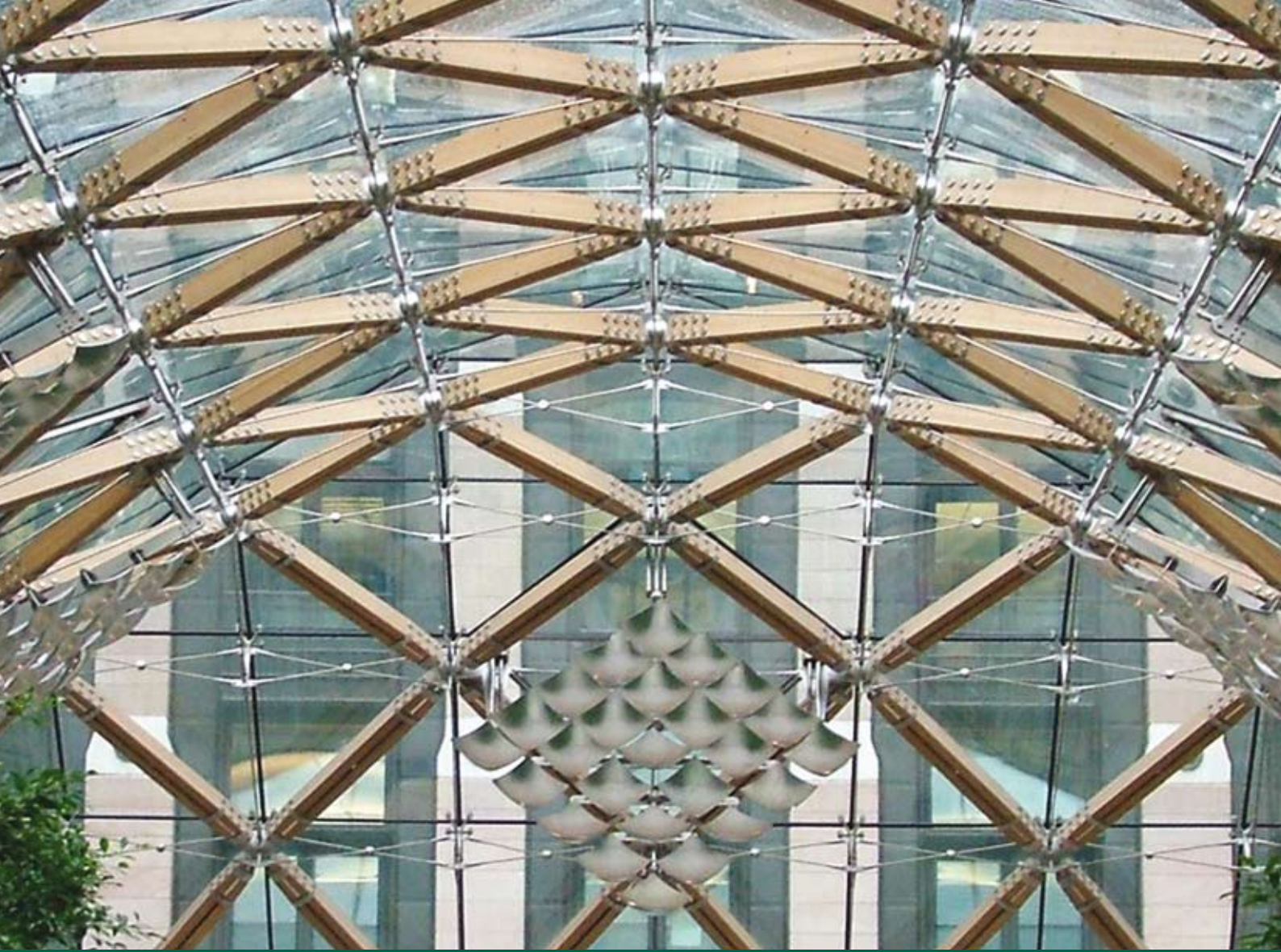
Introduction

In July 2005 the House of Commons Commission adopted an outline strategic plan for the House Administration in the period 2006-2011. The full text is available on the intranet at: <http://intra1.parliament.uk/bb/corporate/Stratplan.htm>. This strategy emphasises that the primary purpose of the House Service is to enable the House and its Members to perform their parliamentary duties effectively. Beyond this we have a duty to promote public understanding of Parliament's work and role by providing information and access. The Board of Management's vision is for the House Service to continue to provide the high-quality advice, facilities and services that the House and Members need in an efficient and cost-effective manner, through a process of continual development in response to changing circumstances and new technological opportunities.

The Strategic Plan identifies three primary objectives and six supporting tasks for the House Service (page 10 of this document) and outlines the level of financial resources that will be available (see How much will it cost? on page 17). The Strategic Plan also sets out six priority areas for the period 2006-2011: accommodation & works, human resources, information for the public, information management & ICT, planning & management and security. For each of these areas the Board of Management has developed a statement of its aims for the planning period, and these are reproduced on pages 22-35.

Much of the responsibility for managing and developing the core day-to-day services which support the work of the House is delegated to the various House departments, and plans for these services are set out each year in departmental business plans. There are opportunities for staff to comment on these plans and contribute to their development. Generally, these departmentally-managed core services are not covered in detail in this plan.

There are, however, services that are either provided on a cross-departmental basis (eg information and access for the public) or are provided by one department for parliamentary users as a whole (eg accommodation and ICT). These services need to be planned at a corporate level. This Corporate Business Plan shows how these corporate services will be developed in the next few years, and how progress will be measured.



2 The Context



The Context

The House of Commons Commission has delegated to the Board of Management the day-to-day running of House services, staff and finances. The Board co-ordinates the work of the seven House Departments, which are, in turn, responsible for planning and managing core day-to-day services.

Review of Management of the House Service

In October 2006 the Commission announced a Review of the Management of the House Service under the leadership of Sir Kevin Tebbit KCB, former Permanent Secretary at the MoD. The terms of reference are:

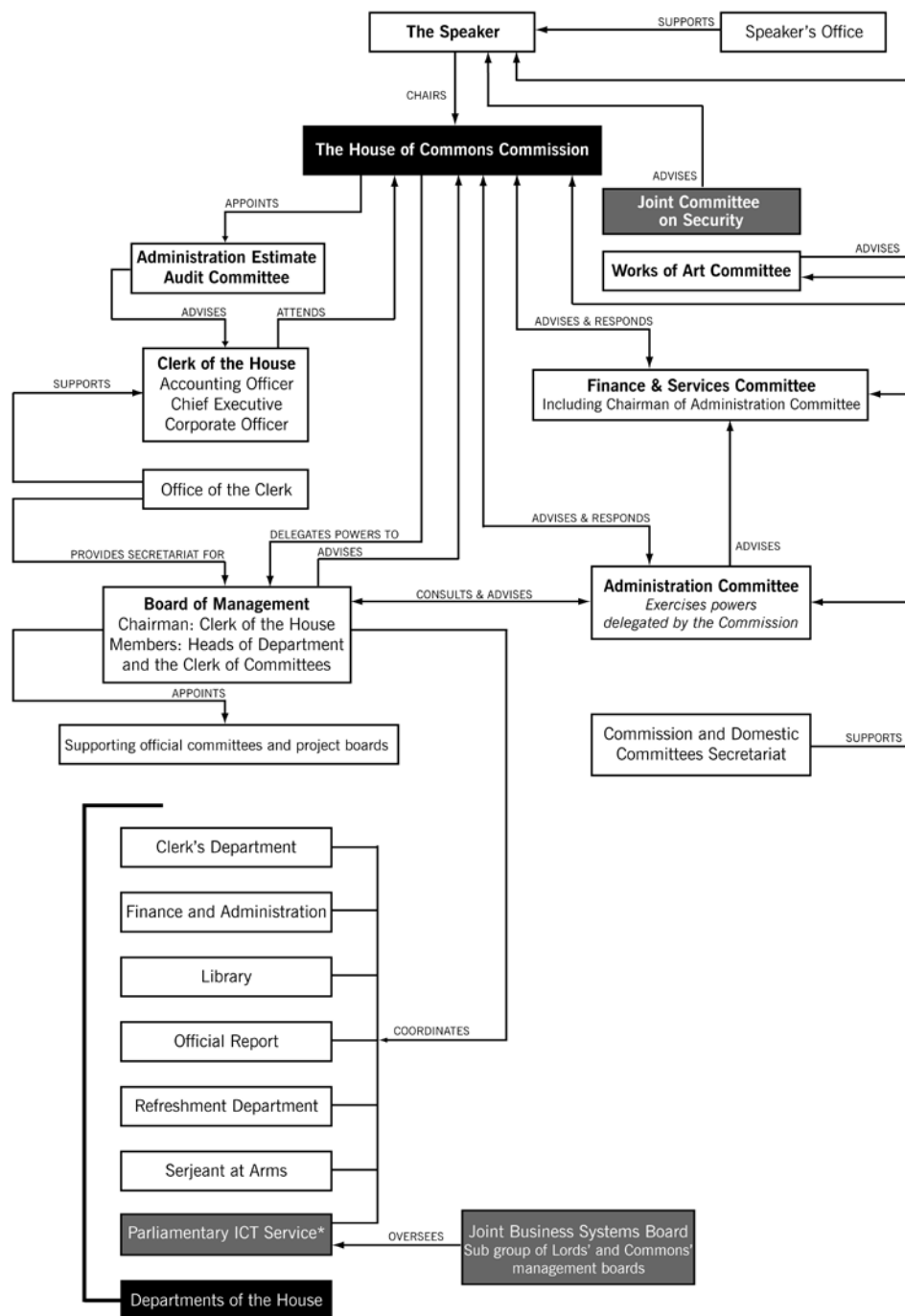
To review the implementation of the recommendations of the report of Mr Michael Braithwaite (HC 745, 1998-99) on the management and services of the House of Commons and his subsequent report of July 2000 on the Serjeant at Arms' Department, and in particular to assess:

- whether the expected benefits have been realised;
- what further actions are required for the House Service to achieve the objectives laid down in the Outline Strategic Plan for the House of Commons Administration 2006-2011;
- whether, in particular, the organisational and staffing arrangements currently in place are adequate to realise the objectives laid down in the Resolution of the House of 26th January 2005 relating to Connecting Parliament with the Public.

Sir Kevin is being supported by an internal team of senior staff. It is expected that the outcome of the review will be known around the middle of 2007.

The Board welcomes the review, which provides an opportunity to revisit the conclusions reached by the Braithwaite reports in the light of the changed circumstances in which the House Service now operates. Sir Kevin and the team will be interviewing a wide range of staff, starting with heads of department and the Trade Union Side.

The governance structure of the House of Commons administration



*Joint service with the House of Lords.
Other shared services include Parliamentary Estates & Works,
Parliamentary Education Unit, Central Tours Office &
Parliamentary Office of Science & Technology

Some facts and figures¹

(i) inputs

- Overall resources for the House of Commons Administration Estimate: around £228m in resource terms (around £178m in cash) for 2006/07
- Administration staff costs: around £55m (excluding pensions)
- Members Estimate managed on behalf of the House for 2006/07: £147m resources (£150m in cash)
- 1,553 full-time equivalent staff (average 2005/06)

(ii) some intermediate outputs (2005/06):

- 137 sitting days (and 86 in Westminster Hall)
- 758 select committee meetings
- 371 standing committee meetings (including Crossrail Bill Select Committee)
- 46,951 pages of vote bundle
- Facilitation of around 4,000 people working in 9 buildings on the House of Commons Estate, including 646 Members and 1,100-1,200 Members' salaried staff
- 11,912 recorded research enquiries to the Library
- 1,345,000 meals served

(iii) some final outputs (2005/06):

- 34 Public Acts of Parliament (no Private Acts received Royal Assent during the year)
- 147 departmental select committee reports
- 61,477 published written answers
- 24,666 pages of Hansard published in print and electronically
- 52,134 individual enquiries from the public answered
- 32 million requests on the Parliament website (this excludes material hosted on the TSO Publications site)
- 108,000 visits organised by the Central Tours Office outside the summer opening and 11,200 by the Parliamentary Education Unit

Administration Committee

The Administration Committee of the House of Commons was established in July 2005 to “consider the services provided for and by the House”. In practice this has largely meant services provided for Members of Parliament, as well as services provided by the House of Commons for others, such as visitors to the House. The Committee replaced the five previous domestic committees that had looked separately at administration, accommodation & works, broadcasting, catering and information.

The Committee has been working on an initial programme of five inquiries. It has already reported on Post-Election Services, Refreshment Department Services and House of Commons Accommodation,

and is expected to report in early 2007 on ICT, with particular reference to services and equipment for Members and their staff. The fifth inquiry is being conducted through a sub-committee in conjunction with the House of Lords Information Committee and is considering the viability of a parliamentary visitor and information centre.

¹Dates in the format 2005/06 refer to the financial year, not the parliamentary session.



3 The Plan



The Plan

The Strategic Plan for the House Administration summarises our purpose and values, and the functions that we perform. (For details of our corporate and core staff values see page 20.) These functions are categorised under three primary objectives – those things we do uniquely because we are the House of Commons Service – and six supporting tasks that enable the primary objectives to be achieved.

What we need to achieve - primary objectives

The House Service's primary objectives (in order of priority) are:

1. To provide the advice and services that enable the House and its committees to conduct their business effectively.
2. To provide the advice and services that enable individual Members (and their staff) to perform their parliamentary duties effectively.
3. To promote public knowledge and understanding of the work and role of Parliament through the provision of information and access.

How we will achieve our objectives – supporting tasks

To achieve our primary objectives we also need to:

- i. provide a skilled and motivated workforce; giving recognition and reward for achievement and ensuring that all staff realise their full potential regardless of level or background; and promoting diversity.
- ii. provide a healthy, safe and secure physical environment in which the business of the House can be effectively conducted; this includes accommodation, office services, catering and security.
- iii. plan and manage all of the House's resources to a high standard, achieving value for money and matching current public service standards including in the areas of risk and change management and environmental protection.
- iv. maintain the heritage and integrity of the Palace of Westminster and other buildings, objects and documents for the benefit of future generations.
- v. ensure that information is well-managed in pursuit of the primary objectives, by exploiting technology effectively.
- vi. maintain a good working relationship with the House of Lords, particularly in the provision of shared services; share information and best practice with other parliaments and assemblies, and co-operate with other organisations that can assist the House Service in its work.

² The full text is available via the intranet at: <http://intra1.parliament.uk/bb/corporate/Stratplan.htm>

Core Services

Between them, these objectives and tasks cover all the major activities undertaken by the House Service. In many cases these activities are core day-to-day services, planned and managed by one of the House departments, and are only covered in summary in this corporate plan. Over the next few years the Board expects that there will be a requirement to develop these core services and up-date working practices. This need will result from the changing demands of the House, external factors such as new legislation, and the continuing need to ensure that resources are managed in an effective and efficient manner. Departments will be asked to prepare revised departmental business plans linked to these objectives and tasks in early 2007. These will detail how core day-to-day services will be delivered, monitored and developed over the next few years. The Board of Management intends that this process should incorporate a high level of input from staff throughout the House Service.

The Strategic Plan also recognises that there are areas of corporate activity, affecting more than one department, which are priorities for development during the planning period. These are accommodation & works, human resources, information for the public, information management & ICT, planning & management and security. For each of these priority areas the Board of Management has produced a statement of its aims for the planning period and the ways in which these will be realised. These statements are set out on pages 22-35.

Primary objective 1

The Board of Management's aim is to continue to provide the House with the high quality advice and services that enable the House to operate effectively. This objective includes procedural advice and administrative support for the Chamber and committees, supporting the House's scrutiny of legislation, the reporting of proceedings and the provision of procedural documentation and briefing materials. Such services must be provided to high and exacting standards, and be planned in a way that enables them to be responsive to the changing requirements of the House. Key indicators of success will be the level of satisfaction of the House, as expressed in particular by the Speaker and his deputies, the Commission, Committee chairmen and the Chairmen's Panel; and the accuracy, timeliness and fitness for purpose of key products such as the vote bundle, Hansard, committee reports and Library briefings.

Modernisation Committee's Report, *The Legislative Process*

In September 2006 the Modernisation Committee published a report [HC 1097 2005-06] looking at how the legislative process could be improved and, in particular, how to make it easier for stakeholders to influence Parliament's consideration of bills. The recommendations have implications for staff in several departments including the Clerk's Department, Library, Hansard and PICT.

Key recommendations were:

- More bills to be considered in draft (greater pre-legislative scrutiny).
- 'Legislation gateways' to be provided on both the intranet and the Parliament website.

- Public bill committees, which will replace standing committees on bills, to have the power to take evidence.
- Research papers to be produced following the Committee stage of most government bills.
- As a pilot, laptop computers to be provided in a committee room for use by Members considering a bill.

The House considered the report on 1 November and agreed to a resolution welcoming the Committee's proposals and to the consequent changes to standing orders.

Primary objective 2

The aim is to provide Members and Members' staff with high quality advice and services to enable them to carry out their parliamentary roles effectively, including accurate and timely procedural advice and information services. The House Service also administers payments and services funded by the Members Estimate, including Members' pay and allowances, training and the central provision of IT equipment. An important guide to the degree of our success will be the level of satisfaction of Members and their staff as reported in the 2007 survey of services.

Primary objective 3

Improving information and access for the public has been a priority since the first strategic plan in 2001, and the last few years have seen the development of visitor services, including the creation of the Central Tours Office, the expansion of Education Unit services and the construction of the new Visitor Reception Building. Information for the public remains a priority for the current planning period, with significant developments anticipated in education services and the Parliament website, and proposals for a parliamentary visitor and information centre. This is covered in more detail on pages 28-29.

Supporting task i

We can deliver the high quality services to which we aspire only if we build up and maintain a skilled and motivated workforce. The House's retention of liP accreditation in 2006 is clear evidence that we are generally meeting good practice standards for staff management and development. We want to work with the unions to improve employee relations, establishing a framework to provide an agreed basis for interaction and union involvement in order that issues can be addressed in a timely and appropriate manner. Other key indicators of our success will be low rates of staff absence and turnover, success in filling vacancies, increasing diversity and evidence derived from periodic staff surveys. Human resources is a priority for the current planning period and is covered in more detail on pages 26-27.

Supporting task ii

The provision of the physical environment in which Parliament operates and the associated office and catering services is a key supporting task and one that consumes a large proportion of overall expenditure. Indicators of success include satisfaction of Members, their staff and House staff with accommodation, office services and catering; no breaches of security in the Chamber or committees; and low levels of accidental injuries. Both accommodation and security are priority in the current planning period and are covered in more detail on pages 24-25 and 34-35.



Supporting task iii

The Board of Management expects that there will be increasing pressure over the next few years to demonstrate that resources are being well-managed and that value-for-money is being achieved. Indicators of success will include sufficient assurance being available to enable the Statement of Internal Control to be signed by the Accounting Officer, projects being successfully completed and benefits realised, resource accounts receiving a clean audit opinion and the House meeting or exceeding environmental targets set for the public sector. Planning and management is a priority area in the current planning period and it is covered in more detail on pages 32-33.

Supporting task iv

The UK Parliament has a long history and consequently an extensive heritage, both cultural and physical. The physical heritage includes buildings, furniture, works of art, documents and artefacts. We have a responsibility to the nation to maintain this physical heritage beyond the degree necessary for our immediate business needs. In particular, the Palace of Westminster must be maintained in accordance with its status as a Grade I listed building and an integral part of a UNESCO World Heritage site, which adds considerably to the complexity and cost of the works programme. Older documents need to be conserved, but we also want to make access to key items quicker and easier for both parliamentary and non-parliamentary users. A strategy for digitising Parliament's historic documents is being developed and a major project to digitise Hansards from 1803 is under way. The Parliamentary Archives provide an archive service on behalf of both Houses.

Supporting task v

Information is essential to many of Parliament's operations, and this information – whether in paper or electronic form – needs to be well managed if it is to be both accurate and accessible. In recent years, the House has invested in major new information systems such as HAIS and PIMS and an objective for the planning period is to exploit this investment to provide better and more efficient services. These major systems need to be supported by a reliable IT infrastructure and coherent information and records management policies. Indicators of success will include satisfaction of Members, their staff and House staff with ICT services, and high levels of network availability and accessibility. Information management & ICT is a priority for this new planning period and it is covered in more detail on pages 30-31.



PICT and ICT strategy

PICT, the Parliamentary ICT Service, came into existence on 1 January 2006 and provides ICT services to Members, Peers and staff of both Houses. The formation of PICT brought together the IT activity, resources and budgets supporting the development of ICT in both Houses of Parliament. One of the aims of this centralisation was to provide an integrated ICT platform, removing duplication and identifying synergies in a cohesive programme of development. In recent months PICT has been working to develop this programme for delivering the ICT services required by Parliament, and the immediate scope and content of the programme was agreed by the Joint Business Systems Board (JBSB) in July 2006.

Progress has been made in the service area. A single service desk has been introduced to replace the helpdesks operated by PCD and other offices and departments. Phase one of the major customer service improvement initiative (CSII) was launched in July 2006 to improve the responsiveness of the unified service desk. Under CSII, average call wait times on the service desk have fallen significantly and the percentage of calls abandoned has also decreased. The CSII phase 1 was a short term piece of work that established the basis for a new customer service upon which longer term initiatives are being built. Phase 2 of the CSII is now under way and is focussing on service management processes and the resolution of problems by service engineers.

Supporting task vi

If Parliament as a whole is to function effectively, the two Houses need to work well together, while maintaining their distinct roles. A number of services are provided on a shared-service basis including Parliamentary Estates and Works, PICT, security, the Parliamentary Education Unit, the Central Tours Office and the Parliamentary Archives. Through the work of the Overseas Office and others we share experience and best practice with other parliaments and assemblies, both in the UK and abroad, through bilateral visits and the work of inter-parliamentary organisations including the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and Inter-Parliamentary Union. There are also other organisations that play a role in promoting the work of Parliament, such as the Hansard Society, with which we co-operate. The UK Parliament will be hosting the 2009 Annual Session of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. This is a major undertaking with some 700 delegates expected to attend and five committees needing to meet simultaneously.

Major Projects

Improvements in services and processes will come partly through incremental change, and partly through major projects. These major projects, which are often ICT or works related, are aimed at enabling the House to meet its primary objectives better. Some major current projects are:

Internet Redesign

As part of the strategy for improving information for the public, the first phase of the project was completed in September 2006 with the launch of a new navigational structure and homepage design. This introduces four new routes to the key information on the website: About Parliament, Members & Staff, Business, and Publications. Information about bills was improved in November 2006. The next phase of the project will look at further enhancements to the What's On pages in early 2007. A more detailed round of user research is being commissioned to ensure that subsequent phases of the project are prioritised according to user requirements and that developments meet the objectives of the key user groups coming to the site.

Cast Iron Roofs

The cast iron roof areas on the Palace have remained largely untouched since they were constructed in the 1840s except for minor repairs and repainting of exposed surfaces. Detailed condition surveys carried out in 2003/04 indicate they now need to undergo a major repair exercise. This will entail removing the cast iron tiles, repairing roof structure and cleaning, repairing cracks and applying protective coatings. This work is expected to be carried out over 16-20 years in a series of phased projects starting in 2008.

Primary services

The primary cabling and pipework for power and heating, mainly located in the Palace basement, is now reaching the end of its economic life. Much of this infrastructure is now over 50 years old and the level of reactive maintenance is increasing year on year. It is now essential to plan for a major programme of service renewal to protect the Palace of Westminster from the risk of plant failure. Consultants are drawing up options as part of a detailed feasibility study to be completed in early 2007. This work will form the basis of a strategic business case to be put before the authorities in both Houses in 2007.

HAIS 2

HAIS 2 is a three-year business change programme, running until mid-2007, to improve the way human resource, payroll, finance and purchasing services operate across House of Commons departments and offices. We plan that by the end of the programme we will have a 'single version of the truth' - the ability to provide access to trustworthy and timely administrative information. HAIS 2 builds on HAIS 1, which was primarily an information system to replace old accounting and payroll systems that could no longer be maintained.

The key objectives of the second stage are to:

- (i) Improve the quality of data and achieve demonstrable value for money when delivering administrative services.
- (ii) Reduce duplication between the Department of Finance & Administration (DFA) and departments in producing, reporting and verifying data, thereby increasing speed, reducing errors and improving consistency.
- (iii) Clarify levels of authority and responsibility between DFA and departments, achieving greater clarity and accountability.

Hansard Digitisation

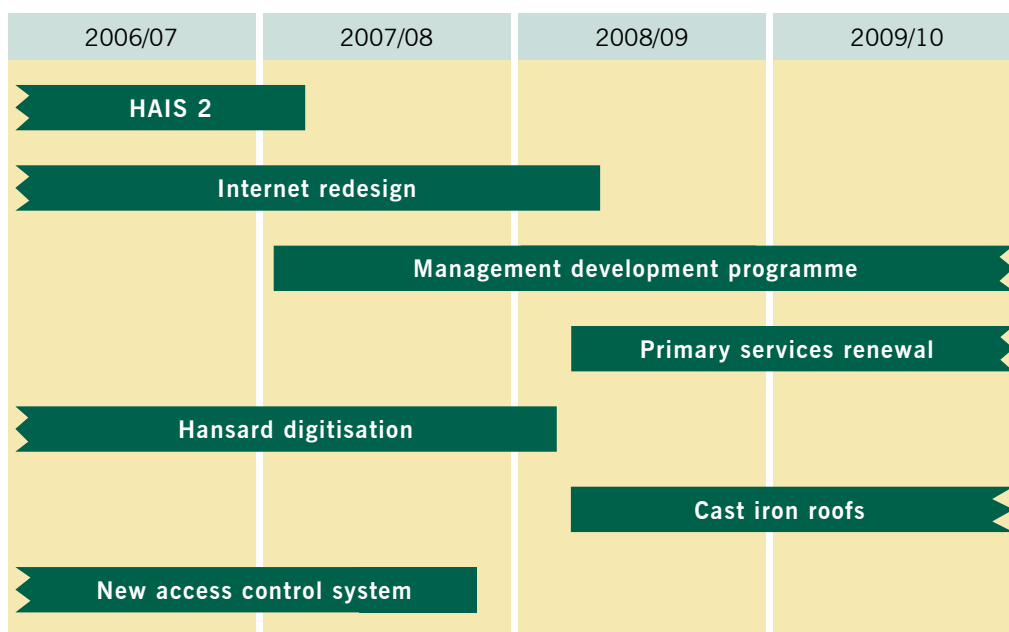
This project will digitise the Official Report from 1803 to the present day. Printed volumes of Hansard will be scanned by a contractor to produce high quality images that will, in turn, be scanned to produce highly accurate machine readable text. The text will be marked up using XML (extensible mark-up language) to assist search and retrieval of material. The digitisation process began in 2005 and will be completed by April 2008. The resulting material will be made available on the Parliamentary Intranet and through the Parliament website. We are liaising with other organisations which are involved in digitising parliamentary material, including the History of Parliament Trust, to ensure that online parliamentary material is brought together as a unified resource.

Management Development Programmes

The Senior Management Development Programme, Managing Together, was launched in July 2005. The initial phase of the programme will see around 90 people participating over the three years 2005 to 2008. A new development programme for all managers will be launched in 2007. A three-phased approach is being developed: an *Introduction Day* for all new managers, a *Foundation Skills* programme to be attended over nine months and a *Managing for Excellence* programme for managers with at least one year's experience. (These are working titles.)

Parliamentary Visitor and Information Centre

In November 2006 the House of Lords Information Committee and a sub-committee of the House of Commons Administration Committee are considering options for the provision of a Parliamentary Visitor and Information Centre. Options include a large scale off-site visitor centre focusing on providing increased access, information and engagement for those interested in Parliament and its procedures, history, art collections and, importantly, its education services. The two Houses are expected to debate the proposals early in 2007.



How much will it cost?

The Strategic Plan also sets out, in broad terms, the level of financial resources that will be available. In particular, the Board undertook, subject to decisions of the House, to manage core services at a level of expenditure no higher than the ceiling previously agreed for 2006/07, after adjustment for inflation. However, there are some circumstances in which it will be necessary to seek additional funding. For example:

- If the House approves a major new service, such as the provision of a visitor centre.
- If a change in the security situation demands significant increases in spending.
- If major increases in works expenditure are necessary in order to maintain the fabric of the Palace of Westminster as a national asset.
- If the House decides that a further significant expansion of the parliamentary estate is required.

The House now budgets on a resource basis rather than a cash basis. The resource figures include non-cash items that represent the true cost of providing services in the current year; for example, depreciation and a cost of capital charges (representing the value of assets used), and notional contributions to recognise future pension liabilities.

Services such as Members' pay and allowances are met separately from the Members Estimate. However, major changes to Members Estimate services (eg the staffing allowance or centrally provided services) can have significant consequences for related administrative services.

Risk Management

The House is continuing to develop its risk management system. In addition to the identification of House-wide corporate risks by the Board of Management, all departments now have a risk register that sets out the principal risks they face and the mitigations that are in place. The Board of Management will be continuing to ensure that risk management principles are consistently embedded at business and operational levels.

To manage some of the risks that have been identified we need to undertake contingency planning and/or business continuity/disaster recovery planning. The Serjeant at Arms' Department and PICT are leading work in this area, and the Board has undertaken to report annually to the Commission on contingency planning arrangements.

Corporate Risk

In July 2006 the Board reconsidered and modified the top-level risks for the House Administration. Staff development and diversity remain priority areas for the Board, and we will continue to monitor them closely, but, as a result of progress being made, they are no longer issues included in the list of high level risks. The risks concerning change management and supplier failure were re-worded. The revised list of the corporate risks is set out below:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Disruption to the work of the House or other services as a result of terrorist attack |
| 2 | Disruption to the work of the House or other services as a result of an unplanned event (eg fire, flood, public disorder, epidemic, etc) |
| 3 | Disruption to the work of the House or other services as a result of a major IT breakdown or the failure to develop an IT infrastructure that is robust |
| 4 | The rate and nature of organisational and cultural change leads to a deterioration in services |
| 5 | The House administration suffers loss of reputation and/or financial loss through failing to comply with legal requirements, audit and accounting requirements, and/or through demonstrably poor value for money in the delivery of its services |
| 6 | A major project or change programme fails to deliver the expected benefits in line with the planned investment agreed in the business case |
| 7 | The House suffers loss or disruption to services through a failing in contract procurement or supplier management |
| 8 | The House administration is unable to carry forward a consistent strategy because of the conflicting demands of key stakeholders in the House and dependencies on the House of Lords |

Monitoring Progress

As with any plan, it is important to make sure that we keep it up to date, and know how well we are doing against the goals we have set for ourselves. One of the key requirements of the House of Commons Service is its ability to respond to the changing needs of the House, and this plan cannot be treated, therefore, as a rigid prescription. We need both the determination to achieve what we have set out to do, and the flexibility to be able to revisit and change plans if that is what the House requires.

The Board of Management will review progress against the plan during 2007/08, and modify and up-date it where necessary. However, the plan set out here provides a clear framework within which departments and staff of the House can plan their own contribution.



Evidence of our progress will be provided by the results of surveys; both of Members and their staff and of House staff. Planning for the next survey of services is well advanced under the auspices of the Services Information Group, and is expected to take place in spring 2007. We expect to conduct a further staff survey in 2007, although this will probably be on a smaller scale than the 2006 survey – only seeking responses from a proportion of staff.

All departments have business goals and targets for their day-to-day business, and it is for departmental management to monitor these regularly. The Board of Management will receive and monitor a regular summary of key activity and performance indicators, and will monitor development activities through a combination of reports from second-tier groups and programme & project boards.

What has been achieved so far?

Visitor Reception Building

The VRB will open in early 2007. It will provide a new, highly secure and efficient entry for visitors to the Palace of Westminster. Visitor Assistants will welcome visitors at St Stephen's, guide visitors to the VRB and, once they have been through security checks, they will enter Westminster Hall through the North Doors. Those wishing to enter the public galleries of both Houses will be able to wait indoors out of the rain. As part of this project the toilet facilities adjacent to Westminster Hall have been upgraded to provide for the increased number of visitors.

Staff Survey & liP re-accreditation

The first House-wide staff survey was conducted in April 2006 with a response rate of around 60%. The overall findings of the survey were extremely positive by comparison with external benchmarks, although opportunities for potential improvement were highlighted. These included increased investment in areas such as internal communications, and a perception that the House was relatively poor at providing opportunities for staff to develop House-wide careers or gain experience in other departments. In the light of the results the Board of Management agreed to a number of specific actions, which are reflected in the Human Resources Plan set out on pages 26-27. The House successfully achieved liP re-accreditation in July 2006. It was clear from the interviews that the majority of staff understood the corporate objectives as set out in last year's Corporate Business Plan and the role that they play in the achievement of them. There was a great deal of pride displayed by staff in believing that their work contributed to the running of Parliament through the support of Members and promoting understanding of the work of Parliament to the public.

New Voters Guide

One of the recommendations in the Modernisation Committee's July 2004 report, *Connecting Parliament with the Public*, was that the House should devise a new voters' guide to be sent to all young people around the time of their eighteenth birthday. Following a period of research and consultation, the guide, titled the *Voting Times*, was launched in July 2006. It is in a colour broadsheet format that is personalised to each individual that receives it, and is intended to encourage more young people to make sure they are registered to vote and to use their vote in the next general election. Distribution of the *Voting Times* is managed by the Central Office of Information, on behalf of the House. It is expected to reach a minimum of 432,000 18 year olds in its first year.

Staff recognition scheme

A scheme to recognise the contribution, effort and loyalty of staff was launched on 9 June 2006 at a lunch for all those with more than 30 years service. The scheme rewards staff who have long service and who leave/retire after long service. Awards for those reaching 30 years service will be made annually at a House-wide awards ceremony. Awards for 20 years service will be made at ceremonies organised by departments.

Values

The Strategic Plan adopted by the Commission states the corporate values of the House Administration as follows:

The House of Commons Service seeks to serve the House of Commons, its Committees and Members, and the public, with honesty, probity and political impartiality; strives to achieve high ethical standards, value for money and professional excellence in all that it does; and seeks to be responsive to changing requirements. As an employer, the House of Commons Commission is committed to maximising the personal development of House staff, to valuing diversity and the contribution of all individuals, and to equality of opportunity.

The core values for House staff are:

Integrity

We serve the House of Commons, its Committees and Members, and the public, with honesty, probity and political impartiality.

Professionalism

We strive for excellence, effectiveness, efficiency and accuracy, remaining always open-minded on the prospects for better ways of delivering our services. We seek to be responsive to changing requirements, and to be outward looking.

Teamwork

We value a co-operative approach, based on mutual support, trust and respect.

Recognition

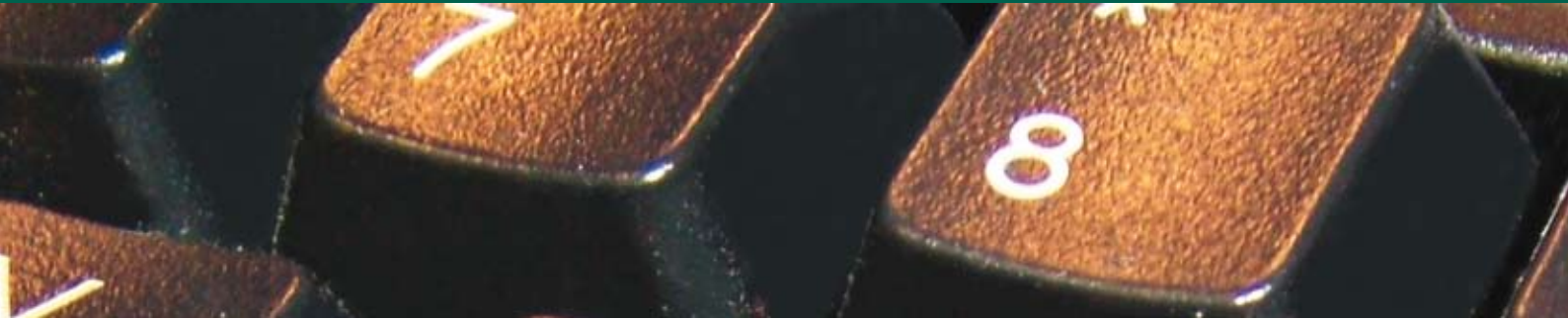
We are committed to maximising personal development, to valuing diversity and the contribution of all individuals, and to equality of opportunity.

Commitment

We seek to ensure that the House of Commons is a good place to work, recognising the importance of maintenance of work-life balance, and seeking to get the most out of the jobs we do.



4 Priority Areas for the period 2006-2011



Priority Areas for the Period 2006-2011

The Strategic Plan adopted by the Commission in July 2005 identifies six priority areas for the period 2006/07 to 2010/11:

Accommodation and works

Space on the Parliamentary estate is at a premium. During the planning period it will be necessary to take a strategic look at how space is used to ensure a good alignment with the delivery of primary objectives. It will also be necessary to develop a long-term investment strategy that will provide accommodation that is fit for purpose and is maintained to an appropriate standard.

Human Resources

The provision of the high quality services required by the House and its Members depends to a large degree on the availability of an appropriately skilled and motivated workforce. Priorities for the current planning period will be: improved mechanisms for career development within a competencies framework; ensuring that the House Service benefits from diversity in its workforce; and the enhancement of management skills at all levels.

Information for the Public

Members as elected representatives have primary responsibility for maintaining links between Parliament and the public, but there are areas where an impartial House Service can and should support this by making the work and role of Parliament better understood. Development, and better co-ordination, of public information, visitor and education services will be a priority area for the planning period: major projects in the early years will include a radical redesign of the Parliament website and, if approved by the House, a visitor centre.

Information Management and ICT

In the previous planning period the House made substantial investments in new information systems including the House Administrative Information System (HAIS) and Parliamentary Information Management Services (PIMS). In addition, the creation of the Parliamentary ICT function will promote unified approaches that are designed to pay dividends. A priority for the current planning period will be to exploit those investments to introduce improved services and more effective ways of working. This will be done in the context of a more coherent approach to information management.

Planning and Management

A priority for the planning period will be to further develop systems of management and internal control in line with best practice, so that the House is able to comply consistently with legal and financial requirements and demonstrate that resources are being managed in an efficient and cost-effective way.

Security

A priority for the current planning period will be to ensure that security arrangements are appropriate to the assessed level of threat and that contingency and business continuity plans are developed and maintained so as to reduce the impact of any disruption caused by a terrorist attack or other unplanned incident.

For each of these the Board of Management has produced a statement of its aims for the planning period and the way in which these will be realised. These are set out below.

A. Accommodation & works (see supporting tasks ii & iv)

Our Aim

To maintain sufficient accommodation of an appropriate standard to meet the various needs of all those who need to work on the House of Commons estate and to optimise its use. At the same time, to maintain the fabric and heritage of Parliament's buildings, historic furnishings and works of art.

Context and dependencies

Space on the parliamentary estate is at a premium. There are currently no plans for more than a very limited expansion of the overall size of the parliamentary estate, primarily intended to provide decant and contingency space. We will therefore have to take a strategic look at how space requirements are forecast and how space is used, in order to provide what the House needs within budgetary constraints. A long-term investment strategy will help us to make best use of space and provide good, well maintained accommodation.

Assumptions are that both Houses remain at Westminster, in a Grade I listed building with a significant number of outbuildings in the surrounding area. Numbers of Members will remain broadly the same. There will be continuing pressure from Members for increased support services provided by the House. Although Members and Members' staff already occupy nearly 60% of available office accommodation on the estate, there is insufficient accommodation to meet current demands for Members' staff to be located at Westminster.

Technology will provide greater opportunities for some of this support to be provided outside the estate and efforts will continue to reduce or remove the disincentives which can discourage Members from locating staff in constituency offices.

A strategic review of the accommodation allocated to Members and their staff is a current priority. This review started in autumn 2006 in the context of the response to the Administration Committee's report on House of Commons Accommodation.

The requirements of new legislation such as the Disability Discrimination Act will need to be taken into account. The need to dovetail arrangements with the House of Lords is another obligation. Security will remain tight (see statement on security below) and may be a limitation on how the accommodation is used.

Risks

- The inexorable increased requirement for space on the estate exceeds that available
- Resistance amongst occupants of the estate to changes in methods of allocating accommodation
- Resistance to other measures such as reduced paper filing and space planning standards
- Insufficient funding to improve standard of all accommodation
- Decant space cannot be maintained, thus delaying improvement works and adding to the irritation of Members and others
- Security priorities or legislation could affect the optimum use of accommodation
- The backlog of essential maintenance cannot be addressed without disruption to occupants of the estate during sitting periods

Goals	Indicators
Providing quality accommodation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor quality space should be improved to a consistent and agreed minimum standard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administration Committee to be asked to advise on and agree minimum room and furnishing standards by mid-2007
Instituting longer term planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25 year estate strategy is maintained with the aim of optimising the use of available space and providing accommodation that is fit for purpose and is maintained to an agreed appropriate standard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 25 year financial plan should be introduced including whole life project costing is maintained Estate review should be continued on a periodic basis Maintain 5% contingency office space to allow flexibility
Making the most of what we have <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve optimum use of the existing space Raise awareness of the cost of space A collaborative working culture should be fostered which is best supported by a greater element of team working in open plan accommodation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress is made towards achieving appropriate accommodation occupancy densities Increasing use is made of home working and open-plan accommodation by those whose jobs allow it Space costing is used to raise awareness of accommodation costs Use more efficient filing and electronic document management systems and reduce filing floor area by 20% by 2009 Maintain periodic review of those units that could be located off site as identified in the Estate Occupancy Study every 3 years
Achieving equity for all <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear, agreed and open standards for all accommodation and required occupants of the estate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards agreed with Board of Management and Administration Committee by mid-2007 Plan for any necessary reallocation agreed and funded Recognise and meet the needs of contractors and their staff
Developing the estate for new needs Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a secure physical environment meeting environmental standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan and, if approved, develop a visitor centre in the vicinity of Parliament, to open after 2010 Fulfil the House's energy and waste management policies Improved signage and access for people with disabilities over 4 year programme from 2006 Improved access for people with disabilities
Maintaining the fabric and heritage of Parliament's buildings, historic furnishings and works of art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Value to the nation maintained by appropriate investment in maintenance, preservation and restoration

B. Human Resources (see Supporting Task i)

Our aim

To meet the needs of the House through effective HR policies and services, and by ensuring the effectiveness of those employed.

To achieve this aim, we will:

- Build and maintain a skilled and motivated workforce, with opportunity for progress and development regardless of level or background, recognising and rewarding achievement.
- Realise the benefits of a diverse workforce, in all departments and at all levels.
- Make the House of Commons Service an employer for whom people actively want to work and enjoy working life, in a world where new recruits and existing staff have demanding expectations, and where good employment practice is the rule.

Context and dependencies

In the next few years we will have to anticipate and respond to the changing needs of Members, new employment legislation (such as the recent changes to the law on retirement age), and developments within the Civil Service and wider public sector. Demographic changes and an ageing population will also have implications for the House Service. Security controls will need to be addressed further, especially in the context of external recruitment of staff and vetting of contract staff.

We recognise that the achievement of our aims will come through excellent leadership and management of people. We welcome the opportunities brought by flexible working that enable the House service to retain valued staff, and ensure continuity of service to Members and others.

Staff will remain focused on maintaining excellent standards of service that meet the needs of the House. We will anticipate, plan and manage the change necessary to achieve this to the highest standards, ensuring that we communicate with and involve staff, while remaining sufficiently flexible to respond to unforeseen changes.

Risks

The House has a primary responsibility for the safety and security of its staff. Security considerations may place new demands and constraints on our recruitment procedures, our working practices, our ability to deploy existing staff flexibly to maintain essential services and retention and recruitment of staff.

We must ensure that the House service is able to meet the changing legal requirements of employment practice. In an increasingly competitive job market, we must ensure that through demonstrable good practice we meet shifting employee expectation, among our staff and potential recruits.

Goals	Indicators
Pursuing good practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We shall pursue and demonstrate good employment practice, to benefit staff and the House • We want to adopt imaginative approaches to HR practice, and anticipate rather than respond to challenges and opportunities • We are committed to ensuring that liP principles are followed • We will provide services and practical guidance to support the business of the House and the management and leadership of its staff • We aim to encourage, enable and reward good performance, and to deal appropriately with underperformance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that the needs of the House are being met • High levels of staff satisfaction as evidenced by regular, House-wide surveys • Evidence that professional development and change management has impacted positively on the organisation. • Address the lessons learned from the 2006 liP re-accreditation by 2007 • Evidence of improvement of practice by comparison with other organisations
Developing a more corporate approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The House must meet its obligations as a single employer • We want to pursue equity of treatment throughout the House Service • We will continue to develop a more corporate approach to HR which incorporates sufficient flexibility to support diverse departmental functions • We will encourage staff to pursue more cross-departmental careers and put in place processes to enable this • The delegated model approved by the Board of Management provides a framework that allows departments to assess their own business needs in a consistent way: to review this to ensure its continued appropriateness and effective and consistent application 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement of greater consistency of practice, and justification of difference on a business basis. Review 2007 • Evidence of inter-departmental mobility of staff as a means of development • The achievement of the benefits arising from HAIS 2, as identified in the post-implementation review (6-12 months after programme closure) • House wide groups such as the Human Resources Group and the Business Planning Group develop and agree policies that meet both corporate and departmental need in 2007
Adapting to changing requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to continue to be adaptable and responsive to the changing needs of the House and of our staff and to improve management skills to support business change • We want to work with the unions to improve employee relations, establishing a framework to provide an agreed basis for interaction and union involvement, and enhancing agreements and procedures as necessary • We will offer staff learning and development through a variety of training and other means • We are prepared to challenge long standing working practices and if necessary introduce processes and management and organisational structures better matched to emerging demands • We will implement the internal communications strategy, improving approaches to communication with staff and improve channels of employee feedback • We need a planned approach to the development of staff, including by providing career enhancement opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A House-wide management development programme for all managers will be launched in 2007. The performance of the Senior Management Development Programme will continue to be monitored, and a decision taken on whether to extend the programme beyond the initial three years • Further development of constructive and harmonious employee relations • Evidence of excellent levels of staff retention using public sector benchmarking (annual) • A more informed and involved workforce (measured by survey and feedback from training)
Achieving greater diversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We must reflect better the diversity of the UK population, in all departments and at all levels • We must ensure that regardless of background or circumstance our staff are given the opportunity and support to achieve their potential, in order to achieve our business goals most effectively • We aim to reach out to under-represented groups in recruitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement in awareness and acceptance of diversity (by survey and training) • House policies are informed by best practice on diversity (to be benchmarked) • House policies on diversity are effectively implemented with evidence of greater diversity across levels and roles

C Information for the Public (see Primary Objective 3)

Our aims

The third of the House's primary objectives is: **to promote public understanding of the work and role of Parliament through the provision of information and access.** Therefore we need to do three things:

- To **inform**. Parliament must ensure that the wider public is well informed about the work and role of Parliament
- To **promote**. Parliament must promote itself as an institution and describe why it is something which people should value
- To **listen**. Parliament must seek and respond to feedback in order to engage people with its work.

Vision: by 2011 we want Parliament to be recognised as:

- Distinct from Government
- Holding Government to account
- Welcoming to citizens
- Working for citizens
- Worthwhile – of real value
- Personal – relevant to the concerns of individuals

Public communications should be focused on the needs and interests of users rather than producers ("starting from where people are at"):

- Subject based
- Community based
- Diverse

and recognised and resourced as a core function of Parliament in supporting the work of individual Members.

Context and dependencies

Context: a democratic institution requires engagement in order to have legitimacy; distrust arises from poor understanding; there is a perception that Parliament does not make sufficient effort to connect with the electorate. This issue is addressed in the Modernisation Committee's report, *Connecting Parliament with the Public* (June 2004), the resolution of the House of 26 January 2005, and in *Members Only?*, the report of the Puttnam Commission (May 2005), and its subsequent review (November 2006), all of which inform this strategy. **Dependencies:** much of the solution to this problem depends on factors in wider society which lie outside the House Service's immediate sphere of influence. This strategy recognises the vital role of individual Members in promoting public understanding of the work and role of Parliament.

Risks

- Lack of political consensus for future developments
- Insufficient management capacity to develop new services and facilities to desired timescales
- Security requirements adversely affect the reception of visitors
- Lack of finance or accommodation
- Technical risks (especially website)
- Further public disengagement
- Changes in education policy require re-development of materials

Goals	Indicators
<p>Outward: improving our connection with the world outside – two way by 2011:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An intuitive website: Parliament explained; searchable, well used and appreciated; integrated video, audio and text • Young people: the parliamentary service plays a full part in ensuring that all schoolchildren have a good understanding of Parliament; young people reaching voting age understand the importance of democracy; education about Parliament embedded in the curriculum • Media: encourage the media to project Parliament as a working institution: the media is well informed; emphasis on TV, internet and local/regionals as well as national news media • Outreach: Subject to political agreement and the necessary financial approvals, House authorities are willing to develop plans for a network of regional centres with Westminster as the hub but focused on communities and their interests; draws on Members as an asset; draws on local infrastructure/possible partnership with public libraries; all localities covered; diverse approach in each locality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website: customer-facing releases every three months (2007); plan syndication strategy (2007); fully comprehensive and up to date searchable website, all parliamentary content, well syndicated; integrate video, audio, text (2008); review and evaluation (2009); web development project 2 launched (2010); full integration of audio, video, text (2011) • Education Unit and young people: MPs in schools programme (2007); working relationship with a named individual in every LEA; evaluation of New Voters Guide (2007); evaluation of educational publications and films (2007); revamp programme of publications for young people and educational website (2008); working relationship with an individual in every secondary school (2008); 50% of schools have had contact with Parliament since 2006 (2009); working relationship with an individual in every primary school (2010); 90% of schools have had an contact with Parliament since 2006 (2011) • Media: all Select Committees given opportunity to develop media and communications plan (2007); improve coverage of European Scrutiny (2007); explore feasibility of more proactive approach to explaining work of Chamber, Westminster Hall, Standing Committees (2007); further develop MCS as central point of contact for journalists (2007); increase camera coverage of committees (2007) • Outreach: progressive implementation of outreach proposals (if approved) based on detached model, starting with one year inward secondment to explore options and develop pilot (2007)
<p>Inward: improving access by 2011:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A parliamentary visitor centre up and running, the hub of the network; access to all, (recognising the needs of minorities and those with disabilities); all visitors to leave knowing more than when they came in; good welcome facilities • A proactive welcome to Parliament for visitors of all kinds subject only to the constraints of security and this being a working environment; primary aim is that our target audience is satisfied • Working effectively with other local institutions but doing so to meet our own objectives • A programme of exhibitions linked to our message and promoting our three objectives of informing, promoting and listening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parliamentary visitor centre: outline proposal to both Houses (2007); final sketch plan agreed (2008); construction begins (2009 or 2010); centre opens (2011) • Proactive welcome: internal signage completed; reasonable adjustments completed for disabled visitors (2008); external signage completed (2009) • Other local institutions: other local attractions promoting Parliament (2007); involvement in World Squares plans to improve visitor facilities around Parliament • Exhibitions: establish programme for 2008 onwards
<p>Outward and inward: principles which cut across both</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All our choices underpinned by research and evaluation • Promote free and open access to information • Work with partners who share our objectives (eg BBC; Constitution Unit; Hansard Society) • Encourage lectures, seminars, etc • Promote our activities to groups who may benefit 	

D. Information Management and ICT (see Supporting Task v)

Our aim

To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Parliament through excellent management of information and exploitation of information technologies.

Context and dependencies

This strategy addresses information held electronically and in other forms, and the technologies needed to support it. It focuses on internal needs; a parallel and overlapping strategy addresses information for the public (see pages 28 and 29). The House will continue to support information and systems initiatives from other assemblies and the government, subject to resources and approval. The business processes and physical proximity of the departments and the Houses mean that they form a single information community for many purposes. The creation of the joint-House Parliamentary ICT Service (PICT) in January 2006 has highlighted the opportunities to consolidate systems serving similar business needs, and reduce the barriers to achieving this.

During the first half of 2006 the PICT Business Relationship Managers worked with Departmental and Office ICT leads and with the PICT Forum to identify and then prioritise the aspirations for ICT developments across both Houses of Parliament. They also gathered the IT requirements of major joint House initiatives, such as the Internet project. In parallel to this consultation, PICT undertook work to identify a future development path for Parliament's Enterprise Architecture. The result is an agreed set of priorities and programme of work for the period up to 2009/10. Progress will depend on the resourcing decisions of both Houses in the context of the three-year financial planning cycle and will be monitored by the Joint Business Systems Board. The programme will include a range of tactical fixes to produce short-term solutions as well as medium-term strategies.

The objective of shared data supported by cost-effective systems is likely to mean that local databases with manual updating are replaced by fewer, larger systems, with wider access and electronic interfaces. Increasing reliance on more automated systems will require high levels of professionalism and system reliability, since failures will be more far-reaching. Very substantial further changes can be expected, not just in technology and in information use but in users' expectations. In common with other organisations Parliament needs to invest continually in IS/IT, but needs to ensure that systems deliver the expected benefits. Investments already made in corporate information systems including PIMS and HAIS need to be exploited.

Risks

- Disruption to the work of the House or other services as a result of a major IT breakdown or the failure to develop an IT infrastructure that is robust
- The House (and its providers, including PICT) may not be agile and responsive enough to respond to unpredictable business needs
- Parliament has relatively few staff with the experience needed to scope and manage ICT/business change projects and managers and staff have finite capacity to support new initiatives. Although external expertise will be brought in when appropriate, the organisation's ability to engage with and supervise projects needs to be taken into account, and projects scheduled accordingly
- Many of the rationalisation opportunities will require cooperation between departments of the House or between Houses. These are not primarily technical issues, but technical constraints will influence viable options
- Parliament's approach to systems is to use tried and tested technology, avoiding riskier "leading edge" developments. In exploiting commercial software, the standard functions covered by these packages, based on use in other organisations, will inform decisions on how the systems should be used and the level of risk involved. Where possible, open standards will be adopted to reduce the risk of being tied to a single supplier and to promote re-use of information and technology

Goals	Indicators
<p>Accessibility: giving Members, their staff, and staff of the Houses ready access to information, when and from where they need it, without their having to know where it is held.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tailored access for users; single sign-on; consistent presentation and navigation tools (wherever viable). Web Centre to provide segmentation of the Intranet by 2007 with a further major review of functionality during the planning period. Constituency Network Project progresses subject to business case • The level and range of IT support offered to constituency offices is improved to a level comparable with that offered on the Parliamentary Estate • Recommendations arising from the Modernisation Committee inquiry into the Legislative Process and the Administration Committee's inquiry into ICT are implemented in accordance with decisions of the House and the Commission • Access to physical facilities suits users' business needs: flexible hours of use and access devices, in line with comparable working environments • Publishing and broadcasting strategies keep pace with users' changing needs
<p>Efficient processing: ensuring that business processes are supported by systems and information which are well understood, straightforward, consistent and cost-effective.</p>	<p><u>In all regular business processes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes advised/entered once; accurately, on timescales which meet business need; clarity on process and responsibility. HAIS 2 to be completed by early 2007/08; feasibility studies and pilots for EDRM functionality conducted during 2007/08; strategy and phasing for replacement of the Parliamentary Administration Database agreed in spring 2007 • Cost of systems and data maintenance comparable with benchmarks where practical <p><u>In periodic processes and unusual events eg Dissolution:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routine processes are flexible and adaptable to special circumstances
<p>Reliability and integrity: ensuring that business processes are supported by robust, reliable and secure infrastructure and appropriate standards and policies, so that both data and technology are trusted.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members and staff have confidence that business needs for security, access, confidentiality and other legal requirements; business continuity and disaster recovery standards are met. Evidence from periodic surveys of Members and staff • Appropriate resources and service level agreements in place. Business continuity and disaster recovery plans are reviewed and up-dated annually • Timely and appropriate provision of up-to-date technology
<p>Capitalising on knowledge: building on a more corporate culture by creating, sharing and using a common knowledge base which is trustworthy, up to date, accurate and timely; treating information as a corporate asset available to all who have a legitimate need for it. Promoting re-use of information where there is an established need, and encouraging innovative use, to improve business operations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-service by staff and Members to information, from administrative data to parliamentary records. Library to have information management best practice embedded within its processes and systems by 2008 • Active searching for reference material on-line (eg similar previous work) to provide an efficient and consistent response • Customers satisfied with availability of information which meets their needs. Evidence from periodic surveys of Members and staff

E. Planning and Management (see Supporting Task iii)

Our aim

The strategic plan identifies a number of high-level objectives for the House Service:

- To plan and manage the House's services to a high standard
- To achieve value for money and be able to demonstrate that resources are being managed in an efficient and cost-effective way
- To be able to comply consistently with legal and financial requirements
- To match public service standards in areas such as risk and change management and environmental protection

Context and dependencies

Excellence of practice in planning and management is essential to maintaining and developing high-quality services and making best use of limited resources. This is reinforced by the increasing levels of scrutiny that we expect to receive from various sources, including the media and public. It is likely that we will have to anticipate and respond to new demands on our governance and financial management procedures (possibly arising from the Review of the Management of the House Service), from legislation and from new initiatives within the wider public sector. Security will present a challenge to our overall budget, and to the flexibility that we need to maintain to be able to respond to changing demands. While much of our effort will be directed at maintaining and continually improving the quality of our core services, we will have to anticipate pressures for change, and plan and manage that change through excellent disciplines based on high quality information.

Risks

The adoption of demonstrable good practice will help to protect our reputation from potentially hostile scrutiny, but we will also have to demonstrate levels of efficiency comparable to those achieved in the broad public sector and relevant parts of the private sector.

Our ability to maintain and strengthen our planning and management capability is critically dependent on the successful implementation of HAIS 2, on the embedding of delegated management and on our ability to recruit, develop and retain the specialist skills these new disciplines call upon.

Goals	Indicators
<p>Building central direction and strengthening corporate planning</p> <p>Within the framework of the “delegated model”, management will continue to develop a consistent corporate approach to planning and financial control, while respecting real differences in the core business of each department.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate objectives are clear, relevant and understood throughout the organisation evidence from periodic staff surveys and other feedback • Opportunities and changes in user needs are identified and actively managed • The Resource Framework is up-dated and strengthened (2007) and new policies adhered to • Departmental business plans have explicit linkages to corporate objectives tasks and risks • Corporate strategies for estates, ICT, etc support corporate objectives and tasks (2007) • Business cases for new investments link to corporate objectives and tasks
<p>Demonstrating that resources are being managed in an efficient and cost-effective way</p> <p>A programme of reviews of services will be conducted. Although not every department lends itself to the same kind of analysis, a suite of review methodologies will be implemented and a regular timetable of review. This will complement and build on the improved performance measurement we will secure from our pursuit of better management information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substantial programmes of internal audit and value for money (VFM) are conducted and action taken on recommendations (throughout period) • Projects are successfully completed and benefits realised • Key Performance Indicators are developed at corporate and departmental level and actively monitored (2007) • Clean audit opinions achieved each year
<p>Ensuring compliance with current and emerging requirements for governance and financial management</p> <p>We have an obligation to comply with existing regulations, and a responsibility to anticipate and prepare for those likely to emerge. Where compliance is voluntary we will evaluate the benefits and costs and take action. We must ensure that a high standard of internal control is maintained.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient assurance available to enable the Statement of Internal Control to be signed by the Accounting Officer (annual) • Satisfaction of audit committee • New requirements are identified and responsibilities allocated • Number of legal and other (eg Information Commissioner and HSE) enforcement actions (measured annually) • Consistent adherence to procurement guidance, Financial Procedures and Resource Framework
<p>Strengthening the quality of the under-pinning management disciplines and information</p> <p>We will provide evidence of the fitness for purpose (quality) of our service provision, reliability, consistency and VFM. HAIS is designed to provide a sound basis for financial planning and management. Once established, we will build on the foundation this programme offers and continue to develop the quality of our financial management. Risk management and project management will also be improved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HAIS provides timely and accurate data for finance, procurement and HR and enables information to be shared appropriately (2007) • System of cost attribution developed (2007) • Key performance indicators are developed at corporate and departmental level and actively monitored (2007) • Resource budgeting embedded by 2008 • Key risks are addressed in corporate and departmental plans and actively managed • Projects are supported by suitably trained and experienced staff resources. A house-wide approach to project management is introduced in 2007 • Adherence to business case and procurement guidance

F. Security (see Supporting Task ii)

Our Aim

To ensure that security arrangements are appropriate to the assessed Threat and Response Levels. There is also the need to balance the protection of the Parliamentary Estate and those working in it with the continuing working of the House in all its facets.

Context and Dependencies

There will be a continuing threat from terrorism. Also individuals and groups, for a range of motives, will attempt to penetrate our security arrangements and will want to interrupt the work of Parliament.

An assumption is that sufficient resources will be available to fund security measures and projects that will protect the Palace of Westminster from attack and incursion, and deter those who might entertain these aims. Members and staff will be asked to accede to security directions and respond appropriately to evolving security measures. Some of these measures may be regarded as intrusive and a change for the worse, but will only be implemented after recommendation by the Security Co-ordinator and Security Review Implementation Board to the Joint Committee on Security and other Committees of Members.

A new access control system for the Parliamentary Estate and other outstanding recommendations arising from the 2004 review of security will be implemented as a matter of priority and as quickly as possible. The Parliamentary estate's security measures will be consistent with, and where appropriate contribute to, the wider Whitehall community, as part of the Government Security Zone. The Palace of Westminster will seek additional security measures for the Parliamentary Estate as and when the World Squares Project includes Parliament Square.

Our security policy and its physical manifestations will make use of emerging technology and best practice. Such innovations will reflect the advice and support of the Security Service and the Metropolitan Police Service. There will be linkage to, and support needed from, the work being done on Information Management, another strand in the House of Commons' overarching strategy. New technology and improvements to user awareness are both key components of the IT security strategy.

Risks

- Security measures perceived to be inappropriate to changing levels of threat, and the Alert State.
- Lack of support from Members both in House committees and individually
- Members and others regard security measures as intrusive and making their job more difficult to do efficiently and effectively
- Insufficient funding for recommended measures, particularly the cost of additional policing.
- Lack of trained and committed staff involved in security policy and operations. This may be compounded by an inability to recruit suitable staff, both police officers and security officers
- The increase in visitor numbers makes effective security more difficult



Goals	Indicators
<p>Securing the perimeter</p> <p>Measures will be developed to mitigate the effect of vehicle and other external attacks against the Palace of Westminster.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete improvements to protective barriers (Phase 3) • Perimeter security reflects the changes to the traffic flow in and around Parliament Square • Feasibility of offsite commercial vehicle searching facility validated and approved by November 2006 and implemented during 2007
<p>Improving access</p> <p>A new access control system will be implemented to improve perimeter security arrangements and control movement once inside the premises. New systems will ensure that measures are proportionate, combined with the ability to respond to changing threats and management requirements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New control system in place by October 2007 • System to be 'future-proofed' to allow new technologies to be incorporated • On-going training continues to improve levels of self confidence and control shown by police and security officers when dealing with all those entering the Palace of Westminster
<p>IT Security</p> <p>Additional measures will be adopted to protect the Parliamentary Network and improve information security.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional measures have been approved by JCOS and will be implemented by the end of 2006
<p>Longer term security</p> <p>Contingency and business continuity plans will be maintained, developed and tested in order to reduce the impact of any disruption caused by terrorist action or other unplanned events.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocation plans are maintained and practiced • Continuing practice of Chamber rehearsals • Business continuity and disaster recovery plans are maintained

