

Management Board**2008 Corporate Business Plan**

Paper from the Board Secretary

Purpose

- 1.1. This paper asks the Board to note progress with development of the 2008 Corporate Business Plan and to agree to sign off the final text by correspondence.

Conclusions and decisions

- 1.2. The Board is asked to note progress with development of 2008 Corporate Business Plan.
- 1.3. The Board is asked to confirm that the approach that has been adopted meets its needs.
- 1.4. The Board is asked to agree to sign off the final text by correspondence in early December.

Progress and sign off

- 1.5. The main elements of the text are nearly all in place and are set out in the appendix to this paper. However, a considerable amount of editorial work remains. This includes filling some remaining gaps, finalising the details of the six strategies, ensuring consistency of presentation and completing the organogram.
- 1.6. Given the work outstanding, detailed textual comments are not sought at this stage; however, Board members are asked to raise any general concerns about approach, omissions or tone.
- 1.7. The aim is to issue the plan prior to the Christmas recess. The Board is asked to agree to sign off the final text by correspondence in early December.

Bob Twigger
Board Secretary
November 2007

Appendix

House of Commons Corporate Business Plan 2008

Forward

This corporate business plan has been produced against the backdrop of Sir Kevin Tebbit's *Review of Management and Services of the House of Commons*. While the Review found much about the House Service to praise – our services are well-regarded and management is generally effective – it also identified some areas of relative weakness. In particular, the separation of former Parliamentary Works Directorate into client and provider functions following the Braithwaite reports was found not to be working as intended, and the House of Commons Commission took an early decision to reunify the Estates and Works Services directorates. The Review also argued that the capacity inherent in the existing House departments could deliver higher levels of performance and efficiency if it was brought together and directed in a more strategic way and in a unified form. It was this latter thinking that lay behind the Commission's decision in October to re-align the House Service along functional lines.

This is an exciting opportunity to create a fully unified House Service, freed from the existing departmental boundaries, that will provide Members and others with the highest standards of service. The changes that we are undertaking are far-reaching, affecting all House staff to a greater or lesser extent. It is important that each individual in the House Service understands and supports what is happening if we are to succeed, as I know we can.

Looking back on 2007, there is plenty of evidence to support this belief. The results of the Survey of Services (reported in more detail on p??) were generally positive, with many of those taking part in the survey commenting specifically on the professional nature of services. We have also responded effectively to a number of procedural changes agreed by the House, including the introduction of topical debates and questions.

This is likely to be the last corporate business plan in this format. The intention is to introduce a new, more integrated, business planning system next year that will reflect the unified nature of the new House Service. The resulting plan will cover both corporate and departmental activities, giving a better balance between core services and strategic developments. In the meantime, the four new departments and PICT will be producing interim departmental business plans for 2008/09, and you can read this plan as the context for that activity.

Malcolm Jack
Clerk of the House and Chief Executive

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Introduction

Corporate strategy

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 classifies the activities of the House Service into three primary objectives and six supporting tasks. The main body of his corporate plan is organised around these nine headings.

The 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 Management Board'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 identified 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 there is a more detailed statement of aims for the planning period, which are reproduced under the relevant objective or task.

The Strategic Plan also sets out, in broad terms, the level of financial resources that will be available. In particular, subject to decisions of the House, the aim is 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.
- 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.

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.

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.

The Tebbit report

Sir Kevin Tebbit's *Review of Management and Services of the House of Commons* was published in June 2007.¹ The main recommendations affecting the House Service were:

- A smaller and more functionally organised management board with external input.
- The re-integration of the Estates and Works Services directorates.
- An expanded role for the Office of the Clerk – to be renamed the Office of the Chief Executive.
- The introduction of a performance management system involving improved financial data, benchmarking and rolling surveys of Members' satisfaction.

The Commission has taken decisions on a number of these issues. A new Management Board replaced the existing Board of Management from 22 October. The Management Board consists of the Clerk, as Chief Executive and Chairman, four director generals with functional responsibilities, and up to two external advisors. The aim of the Commission and the Board is to create a fully unified House Service that will provide Members and others with the highest standards of service.

The six House departments other than PICT are being merged into four new departments broadly aligned with the Director Generals' responsibilities. These will be:

- **Chamber and Committee Services** – to provide advisory and other services that support the work of the Chamber and Committees (including security and ceremonial).
- **Information Services** – to inform the work of the House and its Members, and to provide information and access to the public.
- **Resources** – to provide HR and finance support to the House Service and to administer Members' pay, pensions and allowances.
- **Facilities** – to provide the accommodation, catering and other facilities required by the House and to maintain the fabric of the buildings.

The aim is to get the new departments established as visible entities and management reporting lines in place by 1 January 2008. It is recognised that the full change process will take significantly longer, and will take longer in some areas than others. PICT will be formally vested as joint department of the two Houses on (probably) 1 April 2008. Pending a review in 2009/10 of the working of the Parliament (Joint Departments) Act 2007, the Director of PICT will attend the Management Board as one of external members,

The Chief Executive and the Management Board will be supported by an enlarged Office of the Chief Executive. Like the Office of the Clerk, which it

¹ HC 685 2006-07

replaces, it will be a small unit outside the departmental structure that concentrates on supporting the Chief Executive in his role as Chairman of the Management Board. The Office's main areas of work will be strategic planning, troubleshooting, performance, internal audit and communications. The governance structure is illustrated overleaf.

PICT

Following the passage of the Parliament (Joint Departments) Bill, and subject to formal agreement, PICT will be vested as a joint department on 1 April 2008. PICT will be established by the Corporate Officers to:

...provide information and communications technology services to both Houses of Parliament and to carry out such functions related to those services as may be allocated to it by the Corporate Officers from time to time.

The joint department will be treated for practical purposes as an extension or extra department of both Houses, rather than as a third institution. This means, for example, that PICT will be represented on project boards and management groups, and its staff will usually be invited to take part in learning and development activities in both Houses. To facilitate this approach, un-necessary differences between the two Houses in areas such as staff pay and financial policies will be removed wherever possible.

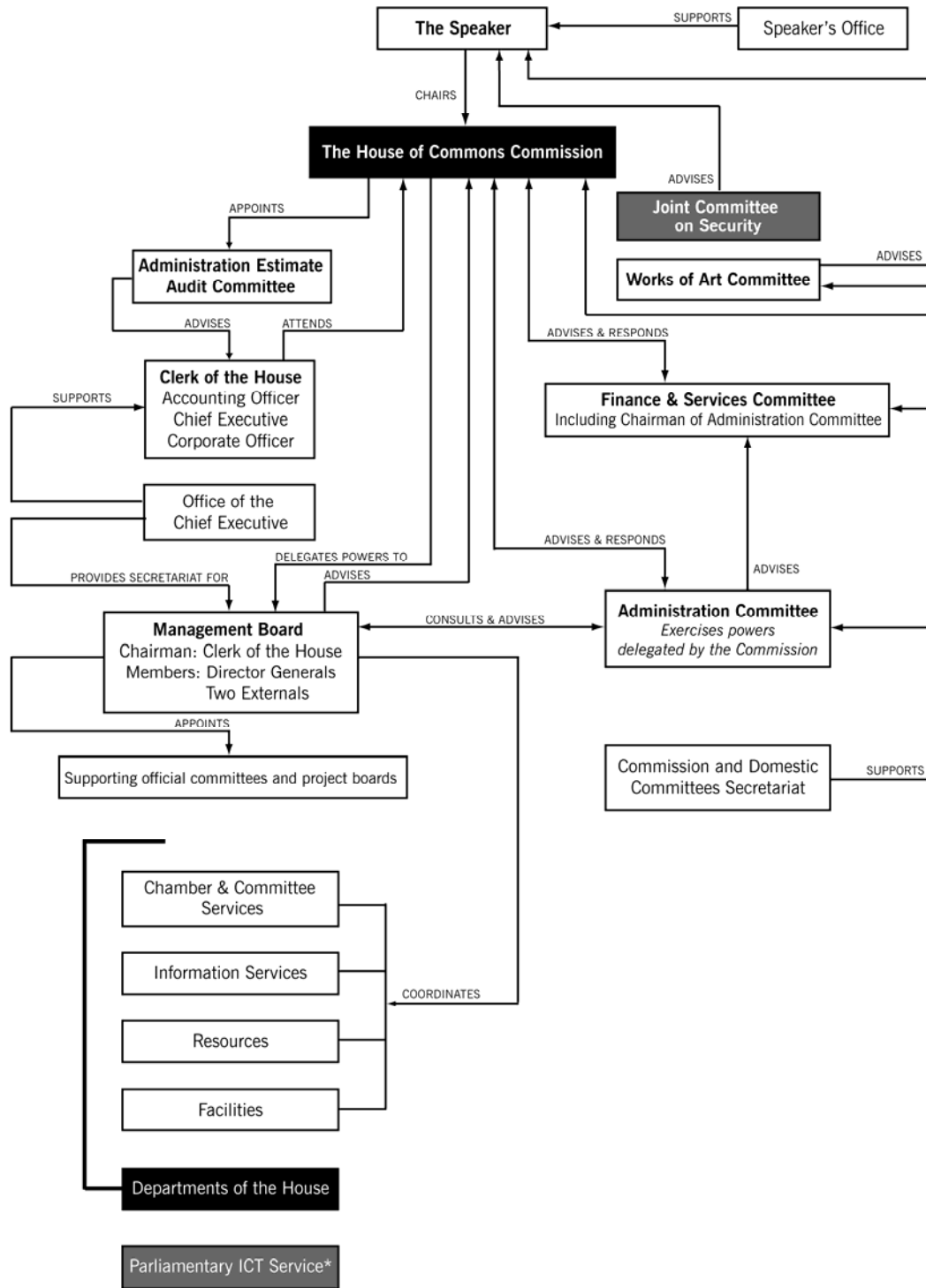
Managing change

The House Service is now entering a period of substantial change. The vision for this process is:

To create a unified parliamentary service which provides first class advisory, executive and support facilities to the House, its Members and the public whilst maintaining a world heritage site.

A small central change team has been set up under the aegis of the Office of the Chief Executive to co-ordinate this process with the new departments. Although the new departments will have a visible identity from the start of 2008, and the management reporting lines will be in place, there will be a great amount of detailed work associated with the creation of departments that will take many months to complete. The changes are not a cost-cutting exercise: the intention is that they will be cost neutral. There are no planned redundancies and the day-to-day roles of the majority of staff will be unaffected in the first instance. However, the changes should result in managerial and cultural changes that will foster better services and greater innovation over the coming years. The Board has agreed that there should be a programme of training and awareness-raising activities early in 2008 to assist this process.

The governance structure of the House of Commons administration from 01.01.08



*Joint department of the two Houses from 01.04.08. Department of the House of Commons until 31.03.08

Risk management and business continuity planning

The House is continuing to develop its risk management system. In addition to the identification of House-wide corporate risks by the Management Board, all departments and some second-tier groups now have a risk register that sets out the principal risks they face and the mitigations that are in place. The priority for the Management Board is to ensure that, now systems are in place, risks are being actively managed and escalated where necessary.

To manage some of the risks that have been identified we need to undertake contingency planning and/or business continuity/disaster recovery planning, and the Board has undertaken to report annually to the Commission on contingency planning arrangements. A project is currently underway to create a Parliament-wide business continuity plan for the first time.

Corporate Risks

The Board currently manages eight high-level corporate risks:

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.

Primary objective 1: Supporting the Chamber and Committees

To provide the advice and services that enable the House and its committees to conduct their business effectively.

Under this task, the Board'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.

This requirement for the House Service to be able to respond quickly and flexibly to the changing requirements of the House has been well demonstrated this year. On 25 October the House endorsed reports from the Modernisation and Procedure Committees that introduced a number of important changes including a new class of weekly topical debates, lasting up to one-and-a-half hours, and periods of "open questions" as part of question time. There have also been changes to the procedures for EDM's and petitions. The Procedure Committee is now considering options for a new system of e-petitioning that could have significant implications of several parts of the House Service. In July the Government also made a number of proposals for constitutional change in its *Governance of Britain* green paper. These included proposals to improve democratic accountability and scrutiny of the delivery of public services in the English regions – The Modernisation Committee has begun an inquiry into this topic which will include consideration of the role of the House of Commons in regional accountability and what resources would be needed to make regional accountability work in the House.

Committee Office Review/Tebbit recommendation 44?

Performance measures

Key indicators of success are 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. Some of the measures currently monitored by the Board are set out below.

Performance Indicator	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08 Apr-Sep	Target
Library Research Paper available by 2R†	97%	100%	100%	???	100%
Hansard Columns per significant error	14	16	20	???	>13
Hansard reports available for the next sitting day	100%	99.7%	100%	100%	100%
Proportion of PQs submitted using "E-tabling"	20.9%	26.9%	36.0%	???	n/a
† All Government Bills and the first seven Private Members' Bills					

Primary objective 2: Supporting Members and their staff

To provide the advice and services that enable individual Members (and their staff) to perform their parliamentary duties effectively.

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.

In May the Administration Committee completed its initial programme of work when it published its inquiry into ICT Services for Members.² The Committee's recommendations were wide ranging, including the establishment of a customer forum, extension of wireless access across the estate and larger email boxes. Potentially, the most far reaching recommendations were related to more reliable support services for constituency offices. In particular, PICT has been asked to prepare costed options for regionally-based support units.

Survey of Services

One important measure of our success is Members' satisfaction with the advice and services that they receive from the House Service. The 2007 Survey of Services took place during March with an overall response rate of 52% being achieved: 45% of Members and 54% of their paid staff returned their questionnaires. The sample of Members was broadly representative. Feedback was generally positive, with many of those taking part in the survey commenting specifically on the professional nature of the House services. Over a third of respondents (39%) are satisfied with the way the services of the House are managed and delivered by the House Service. A further 47% are 'fairly satisfied', although Members were less satisfied than their staff. When asked about the three primary objectives and six supporting tasks of the House of Commons Service, the consensus from respondents was that the balance was about right and should be maintained. However, opinions were somewhat more mixed on the third primary objective, 'promoting public knowledge of the work and role of Parliament', with 42% of people suggesting that this aspect of the House Service's role deserves more attention/resources. The survey highlighted possible areas for improvement within the House services and, as such, was a valuable exercise. Further details of the results are available on the Parliament website.³

The Tebbit Review recommends that there should be more regular 'rolling' surveys of Members' satisfaction. The Office of the Chief Executive will be bringing forward proposals on how to address this recommendation in early 2008

² HC498 2006/07

³ <http://www.parliament.uk/surveyofservices/>

as part of its wider work to introduce an improved system for monitoring performance of the House Service.

Performance measures

Performance indicators regularly monitored by the Board are summarised below:

Performance Indicator	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08 Apr-Sep	Target
Deadlined Library enquiries answered within deadline	96.4%	96.5%	98.3%	97.5%	97%
Undeadlined Library enquiries answered within 10 working days	95.7%	98.5%	98.7%	98.8%	90%
Allowances: Percent of MP's claims paid with 8 days	n/a	n/a	n/a	97.6%	99%
Mail delivered by 2pm†	n/a	92.6%	90.5%	82.0%	100%
†Figure for 2005/06 for the period August to March only					

Primary objective 3: Public information

To promote public knowledge and understanding of the work and role of Parliament through the provision of information and access.

Information for the Public is one of the priority areas identified in the Commission's strategic plan. 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 include the radical redesign of the Parliament website and enhanced visitor facilities. The Board's strategy for the remainder of the planning period is set out overleaf.

Website redesign project

Work on Parliament's website continued throughout the year as part of the strategy for improving information for the public. A frequent criticism of the site in user testing was the poor quality of the search engine and, as a result, the quick search function (available at the top of all pages across the site) has been replaced with a new tool which delivers quicker, more accurate results. The homepage is now updated five times a day when Parliament is sitting with website highlights and latest news including new Committee reports. While a new eConsultations system was designed to enable Committees to set up and conduct online consultations simply and quickly and has been used to support several inquiries during the year. The first in a series of virtual tours of the Palace was launched, covering the House of Commons Chamber, Members' lobby, and Noes lobby with 'hotspots' on features such as the Speaker's chair and despatch boxes to enable users to find more detailed information. A range of other improvements were carried out over the summer, following detailed user research. It is now easier for website users to ask questions and leave feedback, the A-Z Index has been improved and updated, the Glossary has been largely rewritten, and the About Parliament pages are now available in Welsh and Scots Gaelic.

By the end of this year the site will have improved pages on Bills, a calendar of parliamentary business, a series of short interactive guides to explain the role and work of Parliament, and deposited papers will be available online for the first time. In 2008 work will focus on providing access to parliamentary material by subject, improving the presentation of information on Members and committees, the development of a new educational site, and providing online access to the works of art collection.

Education Facilities

To be completed in light of discussion at Administration Committee on 27 November

Performance measures

Some of the measures currently monitored by the Board are set out below.

Performance Indicator	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08 Apr-Sep	Target
HCIO calls answered in 20 secs	88.3%	88.4%	91.2%	86.8%	85%
Fol requests answered in 20 working days†	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
† Figures for 2004/05 are January to March 2005 only. Figure includes a full reply or a satisfactory holding letter.					

Strategy for Public Information and Access

Our Aims for the period up to March 2011

It is a primary objective of Parliament to promote public understanding of the work and role of Parliament through the provision of information and access.

- To inform. Ensuring that the public is well-informed about the work and role of Parliament
- To promote. Ensuring that the public values Parliament as an institution
- To listen. Engaging the public in ways that reflect their interests

- To ensure the public has a better understanding of Parliament as:
 - Distinct from government
 - Holding government to account
 - Welcoming to citizens
 - Working for citizens
 - Worthwhile – of real value
 - Personal – relevant to individuals’ concerns, subject based, community based and diverse

- To build on what has already been achieved in the three interconnected strands of work on using the web, welcoming visitors and reaching out to those who do not visit.

- To assess the extent to which different groups within the population are engaged with Parliament and are being reached by our activities. This will require greater attention to defining target groups, what they can expect from engagement and how best to engage with them. It will also mean greater research and evaluation of our activities, their impact and outcomes.

- To work with intermediaries and partners who can reach various groups within the population better than we could do directly. Important priorities will be teachers, teacher trainers, curriculum authorities, website owners who could re-use parliamentary content, organisations with an interest in Parliament (including non-government organisations, Trades Unions and business), developing the relationship with ALVA and our Westminster neighbours.

Context and Dependencies

Three interconnected strands of work have been developed which form the basis for this strategy - using the web, welcoming visitors to Parliament and reaching out to citizens who do not visit.

Development of the website has been at the forefront of activity since 2006. A phased approach has been taken to development. Improvements are being released each parliamentary term, starting with a substantially enhanced navigational structure and improved material explaining what Parliament does.

The most difficult strand of the work is improving the welcome provided to visitors. There will always be constraints on space and the need not to hamper Parliament's effectiveness as a working institution. Nonetheless the last year has seen the development of the team of visitor assistants and substantial increases in the number of educational visits as well as agreement from both Houses to find the space necessary for a further step change increase in the numbers of educational visits that can be accommodated.

Important improvements have been made in engaging with citizens who do not visit Parliament. Education outreach officers visited 45 education authorities and 50 constituency offices in their first year. A guide for new voters was launched in July 2006 and has been sent to 18 year olds on or about their birthday.

The media relations teams have helped improve significantly the reporting of Select Committee work in the media. Broadcasting of parliamentary proceedings has been substantially enhanced and all proceedings taking place in public are also "webcast" over the internet. Both Houses have also agreed plans for further outreach work in future.

Risks

- Lack of political agreement on future developments. Especially on website services and outreach.
- Security constraints limit the welcome afforded to visitors.
- Lack of accommodation, especially for schools visits.
- Changes in education policy which require re-development of resources.
- Management capacity to deliver necessary change with the resources available.

Goals	Actions	Indicators
<p>To have in place a well used and appreciated parliamentary website that explains all that Parliament does, integrates video, audio and text and provides opportunities for engagement, with content which is re-used by third party websites and other channels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radical redesign of site completed • Complete virtual tour of the Parliamentary Visitor Route live on the website • Substantially increase the re-use of parliamentary content from the website • Fully integrate audio, video and text on the website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieved by December 2008 • Achieved by summer 2009 • By March 2010 the use of parliamentary content from the website will have increased significantly, measured by the number of sites in reach. • Achieved by March 2011
<p>To ensure that all those who visit Parliament will feel welcome and will know more about Parliament when they leave than when they arrive and to work actively and constructively with others in the local area to ensure that the whole visitor experience is as attractive as possible.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install the kiosks permanently in Westminster Hall so all visitors can access the website while onsite. • Develop a series of exhibitions to further inform all visitors on topics relevant to Parliament. • Extend Visitor Assistant Services to the rise of both Houses. • Trial the opening of Parliament to visitors on Saturdays on a paid ticket basis. • Put in place reasonable adjustments for disabled visitors across the parliamentary estate • Complete external signage improvements for visitors • Put in place educational facilities to accommodate 100,000 learners per annum • Collaborate on improvements to Parliament Square 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From 2008 kiosks installed permanently in Westminster Hall. • A series of exhibitions is held during 2008 – 2011 • Achieved in 2008 • Trial held from June – October 2008 (outside of Summer Opening) • Achieved by December 2008 • Completed by 2009 • Enhanced educational facilities in place by September 2011 <p>Regular input from Parliament resulting in improvements to Parliament Square completed by March 2011</p>

<p>To reach those who do not visit Parliament we will encourage improvements to the quality, scope and range of media coverage of Parliament and build relationships to engage with schools, communities and organisations across the country.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of pilot outreach projects • The Parliamentary Education Service to develop a working relationship with contacts in every secondary school in the United Kingdom. • Review of new voters' guide • The Parliamentary Education Service to develop a working relationship with contacts in 90% of all schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot projects reviewed by July 2008 • Achieved by December 2008 • Review of new voters' guide completed by October 2009 • Achieved by March 2011
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Supporting task I: Human resources

To 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.

Human Resources is one of the priority areas identified in the Commission's strategic plan. 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. The Board of Management's strategy for the remainder of the planning period is set out overleaf.

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.

2007 Staff Survey results

The 2007 Staff Survey was similar in both content and results to that conducted in 2006. 87% of respondents were fairly or very proud to work in the House of Commons, and 91% believed that, overall, it was a fairly or very good place to work (90% in 2006). The best aspects of working in the House were perceived to be the provision of annual leave, pension, colleagues and – although more variably – the content of the work. The majority of staff felt that their pay, benefits and employment conditions were quite or very fair in comparison with those of other staff in the House of Commons, the Civil Service and other parts of the public sector but not with the private sector. A number of areas of concern were raised, including perceived inequalities between departments, failure to manage under-performance and over bureaucracy. These have formed part of the backdrop to the development of the revised HR strategy set out overleaf.

Performance Indicators

Indicators regularly monitored by the Management Board are set out below:

Performance Indicator	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08 Apr-Sep	Target
Sick absence rates†			7.8	???	n/a
Diversity of staff by gender (% male) ‡	53.4%	54.8%	53.2%	54.3%	n/a
Diversity of staff by ethnicity (% white) ‡	81.1%	81.7%	81.1%	80.0%	n/a
† average of working days lost per person per year					
‡ Calendar year					

Strategy for Human Resources

Our Aim for the period up to March 2011

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

Our HR strategy focuses on four themes:

- strengthening the service ethos
- continuously improving effectiveness and efficiency and demonstrating value for money
- anticipating and adapting to changing requirements
- being a diverse, outward-looking organisation, where equality of opportunity is valued.



We will concentrate on these functional areas:

- recruiting the right people
- developing the skills and professional expertise we need
- managing performance
- retaining, rewarding and motivating the right people
- working in partnership with staff and their representatives
- communicating effectively
- designing and renewing work processes and methods.

Context and Dependencies

The reconfiguration of the six departments of the House into four departments, reflecting specific areas of service delivery, provides the framework for a more unified parliamentary service and reinforces our focus on maintaining excellent standards of service. Planning and managing this change effectively while continuing to concentrate on anticipating and responding to the changing needs of Members, new employment legislation and public sector developments are at the core of our HR strategy.

Risks

- The House administration fails to recruit and retain staff with the necessary skills to sustain the quality of services and meet the changing demands of parliamentary work

- The House administration fails to develop staff to ensure they have the necessary skills to sustain the quality of services and meet the changing needs of parliamentary work
- The House administration fails to achieve, and thereby benefit from, greater diversity in its work force at all levels.

Goals	Headline actions	Indicators
Strengthening the service ethos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a consistent approach to recruitment and initial selection, using a shared framework that emphasises service delivery • Ensure that individual effort is aligned to business plans through individual and team objectives • Install reward systems that are attractive in the external labour market, and are motivating and cost effective for the business • Develop the range and consistency of communication channels, especially direct managerial communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased focus on service delivery • Consistency in recruitment and selection processes • Annual staff reports with clear links to business plan objectives. Revise by 2009. • Recruitment and retention of staff with the necessary skills (evidence – turnover rates) • High levels of staff satisfaction as evidenced by House-wide surveys
Continuously improving effectiveness and efficiency and demonstrating value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly benchmark current recruitment processes against best practice to ensure they are as speedy and cost-effective as possible • Monitor performance against external benchmarks • Clarify line managers' responsibilities and obligations in relation to staff performance and attendance and ensure they are applied effectively • Explore different options to current work practices and methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment needs met within required time frames, value for money demonstrated • Evidence that standards match or better those of appropriate external business or service providers. Benchmark during 2008/09 • Evidence of consistent practice, refresher training for line managers that reinforces managerial guidance on performance and attendance • Work practices and methods that demonstrate both effectiveness and efficiency
Anticipating and adapting to changing requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review work force plans to ensure they will meet changing requirements • Encourage staff to increase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that the needs of the House are being met • Evidence of increased inter-departmental mobility

	<p>their knowledge and skills by working in different functional areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop participative mechanisms that facilitate the adoption of new working arrangements • Involve staff in planning changes that affect them 	<p>of staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further development of constructive and harmonious employee relations • More informed and involved work force (measured by survey and business results)
<p>Being a diverse, outward-looking organisation, where equality of opportunity is valued</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit staff who are representative of the UK's diverse communities and can reach out to them • Develop a support network to encourage target under-represented groups to participate in development programmes and activities • Develop a role/reward arrangement that is capable of accommodating people of all ages • Ensure that all outward-facing staff are trained to deal positively with the public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal work force reflects make-up of external population • Increased participation by under-represented groups in development programmes and activities • Consistency in reward arrangements • Evidence of customer satisfaction

Supporting task II: Accommodation, security and catering

To 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.

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.

Accommodation

During 2006/07 the Commission agreed a new outline strategy for accommodation. The main elements of this strategy are:

- As a priority, to address the substandard areas of Member accommodation identified by the Committee.
- To move towards the application of agreed space standards as opportunities arise and unless specific tasks demand otherwise.
- To develop information about costs of accommodation that will better inform decisions about requests for additional staff or the provision of new services.
- To identify additional office accommodation in the immediate area of the Estate to directly or indirectly provide suitable decant accommodation for Members and their staff and, if agreed by the House, provide additional space for education facilities.
- To make better use of areas currently used for storage.
- To keep under review the need for third-party occupants to be on the Estate.
- To periodically assess options for reducing the need for staff accommodation at Westminster (eg through outsourcing or greater homeworking).
- To seek sufficient leased accommodation in Westminster to meet anticipated medium-term business needs.

Outcome of Administration Committee on 27 November**Works****Progress on Estate Strategy**

The Board's strategy for accommodation and works is set out overleaf on p??.

Catering

The House of Commons Administration Committee reviewed the Refreshment Department's services last year. During 2007, the department has been

implementing the agreed recommendations, including changes to the menus in dining rooms and developing a catering strategy for the next five years. To this end, benchmarking of external organisations and additional customer feedback research has been undertaken to ensure that catering and retail services address customer expectations. A new Executive Chef started work in January 2007; he and the catering teams have been working closely to implement both new food products and complementary services across the Department.

Security

Security is one of the priority areas identified in the Commission's strategic plan. 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. The Board's strategy for the remainder of the planning period is set out on p??.

Performance Indicator	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08 Apr-Sep	Target
Accidents causing injury on the Estate†	125	114	122	52	n/a
RD subsidy (% of costs)	43.4%	45.2%	46.6%	56.9%	45%
Cleaning performance: HoC staff	86.6%	86.5%	88.5%	87.6%	86%
Cleaning performance: Contractors	87.4%	85.2%	83.9%	84.0%	86%
PWSD helpdesk: cases resolved within target	87.2%	89.4%	88.4%	88.7%	implicit
† Includes both Houses and visiting members of the public					
Figures in bold don't tally with HoCC report					

Strategy for Accommodation and Works

Our Aim for the period up to March 2011

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 Issues

Space on the parliamentary estate remains at a premium. A very limited expansion of the overall size of the estate has recently been achieved with the leasing of 14 Tothill Street. This additional accommodation will be used to provide accommodation for Departments of the House to permit improvements in

the quality of Member and Members' staff offices and refurbishment of existing buildings. Decant and contingency space will become available too. A relocation strategy is being developed. It will form a major component of the strategic look at how space requirements are forecast and how space is used, 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 1 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. There remains significant pressure on Member's staff accommodation at Westminster. The new building will overcome this need if space is allocated within the standards agreed recently by the House of Commons Commission.

There will be a need for significant refurbishment in the Palace and outbuildings. This will be detailed within the 25 year estate strategy. How this work will be executed is not yet clear but an element of decant accommodation within the secure perimeter is likely to be required in order to facilitate it. The requirement will be developed within the relocation strategy.

Technology will provide greater opportunities for more 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.

The strategic review of the accommodation allocated to Members and their staff (started in autumn 2006 in the context of the response to the Administration Committee's report on House of Commons Accommodation) continues. The acquisition of the Tothill Street building has provided the opportunity to develop the next phase of the task.

The requirements of new legislation have to be taken into account particularly as they change health and safety requirements. Work has started on the implementation of the Disability Discrimination Act and an ongoing programme developed. 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 accommodation is best used.

Risks

- Resistance amongst occupants of the estate to changes in methods of allocating accommodation and to the new space standards.
- Resistance to other measures such as reduced paper filing
- Requirements for space on the estate cannot be achieved because measures to improve existing uses are not achieved.
- Insufficient funding to improve the standard of all accommodation.

- Decant space cannot be *achieved* thus delaying improvements 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	Actions	Indicators
<p>Providing quality accommodation Poor quality space should be improved to a consistent and minimum standard.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree strategy for removing windowless offices and consequent accommodation changes • Develop detailed plan for Administration Committee • Agree decant needs for the Parliamentary Estate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree a strategy for removing the windowless offices and occupying Tothill Street by Easter 2008 • Plans developed, costed and agreed by 200.. • Work completed by tbc
<p>Instituting longer term planning 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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reunify Parliamentary Directorate of Estates • Produce 25 year estates strategy • Produce 25 year estates financial plan (based on whole life costing?) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parliamentary Directorate of Estates established by April 2008 • Estates Strategy agreed by July 2008 • Financial plan agreed by ... and annually thereafter

<p>Developing the estate for new needs including a secure physical environment and by meeting environmental standards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fulfil the House's energy and waste management policies • Signage and access for people with disabilities is improved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised targets for the Parliamentary Estate are agreed by early 2008. • Targets for energy and water use and for recycling are met. • A business case for a programme of improvements is agreed by April 2008
<p>Maintaining the fabric and heritage of Parliament's buildings, historic furnishings and works of art.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value to the nation maintained by appropriate investment in maintenance, preservation and restoration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete asset register on Archibus by April 2009 • Carry out annual reviews of the asset register • Conform to the standards laid down by English Heritage and other external bodies. •

Strategy for Security

Our Aim for the period up to March 2011

To ensure that security arrangements are appropriate to the assessed national Threat and Response Levels as they affect the Parliamentary Estate. There is also the need to balance the protection of the Parliamentary Estate and those working in it with the continuing effective working of the House in all its facets and the increasing number of visitors to Parliament.

Context and Dependencies

There will be a continuing threat from terrorism. Moreover it is likely that 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 continue to 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 recommendations arising from the 2004 review of security are being

implemented as a matter of priority. 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 and the World Squares Project. Work is also underway to establish an off site facility where deliveries to the Parliamentary Estate can be screened.

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 by some to be inappropriate to changing levels of threat, and the Alert State
- Lack of support from Members in both Houses, 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, which may include 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	Actions	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 implementation in autumn 2007. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning for the permanent post-CORUS scheme, consistent with World Squares, and review of traffic use on Abingdon Street - now and onwards; implementation date not yet known • Project for an offsite commercial vehicle searching facility approved before the end of 2007, with contractor appointment and implementation during 2008/9

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of feasibility study of a software application designed to spot likely terrorist reconnaissance. Initial work in conjunction with other agencies and departments completed by end 2007 with possible contract and implementation phase during 2008.
<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 begins to be put in place during October 2007, with full system in operation by spring 2008. 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 • Pass holders will continue to be screened thoroughly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New control system fully operational no later than April 2008 • Visitor Reception Building opened • Draft schedule of continuation training produced by Head of Security annually and included in CO7 plan. • Monthly data to be collected indicating effectiveness of search regime
<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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full implementation of these measures, in particular launch of the IT security awareness programme for MPs and staff to be in place and launched by end of January 2008.
<p>Insider Threat</p> <p>Measures will be taken to minimise the employment of, or access by, individuals who may present a threat to parliamentary security.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures recommended to JCOS during autumn 2007 with implementation thereafter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparations for measurable improvements reported back to JCOS by January 2008. In particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identity checks for Members' staff ○ Automated pass expiry

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Compulsory security briefings
<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 practised • Continuing practice of Chamber rehearsals • Business continuity and disaster recovery plans are developed and reported on to the Management Boards of both Houses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson learned papers produced after every relocation and Chamber exercise

Supporting task III: Planning and management

To 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.

Planning and Management is one of the priority areas identified in the Commission’s strategic plan. 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. The Board’s strategy for the remainder of the planning period is set out overleaf.

This is an area where recommendations of the Tebbit Review are an important determinate of the work programme. For example, those relating to the introduction of a performance management system, reviewing the organisation of the finance and procurement functions and delivering value for money.

Performance measures

Some of the measures currently monitored by the Board are set out below.

Performance Indicator	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08 Apr-Sep	Target
Undisputed invoices paid within 30 days	84.3%	83.0%	91.5%	88.3%	100%
Energy usage relative to target	2.6%	2.4%	-7.7%	-12.1%	implicit

Strategy for Planning and Management

Our aims for the period up to March 2011

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

- To achieve excellence in practice and planning in managing the services of the House;
- To demonstrate that resources are being managed effectively and in a cost-efficient way that demonstrates value for money and flexibility;
- To be able to comply with regulatory and financial requirements, and at least able to match public service standards.

Context and dependencies

Successfully planning and managing the services of the House is vital if the House Service is to continue to provide high standards of continuing services and to be able to meet future challenges. Owing to the particular nature of the House of Commons, the House Service needs to be flexible in its approach to be able to satisfactorily respond to demands for new services as they arise. For example, in 2008/09 the implementation of the recent Review of the Management of the House Service will affect a number of aspects of corporate planning and have financial implications; it is therefore important that the House Service can respond promptly to implement such changes in a timely and cost-effective manner. While improvements in services may cost money, value for money remains important. The House Service must demonstrate that it is operated in an effective and cost-efficient way (allowing for the required flexibility). Meeting the necessary financial and regulatory requirements is essential both to provide assurance and to help maintain the reputation of the House Service.

From 1 April 2008 PICT will be set up as a joint department under the Parliamentary (Joint Department) Act 2007 to provide ICT services to both Houses. Its staff will be employed by the Corporate Officers of the two Houses. Operational priorities will be agreed each year with the Joint Business Systems Board (JBSB), and its funding will be provided via a budget supplied jointly by the two Houses. The operation of the arrangement will be reviewed in 2009 or 2010. No further joint departments on this model are planned at present, but other shared services such as Estates and the Parliamentary Archive continue to be provided by one or other House on a recharge basis.

Risks

Achieving excellence in planning and managing the services of the House

- Management Board fails to set clear strategy
- Change programme does not meet all requirements
- Ability to managing expectations around service delivery
- Availability of skilled resources
- IT and other support systems not fit for purpose

- Failure to provide quality management information for reporting purposes and to inform decision making

Demonstrating that resources are being managed effectively and in a cost-efficient way that demonstrates value for money, as well as flexibility

- Lack of data integrity on the IT and other support systems leads to poor quality information being provided to managers
- Failure within internal controls leads to loss of public funds

Complying with regulatory and financial requirements, and at least match public service standards

- Finance and procurement policies do not meet operational needs, or are out of step with regulatory framework (e.g. International Accounting Standards)
- Financial and procurement guidance not kept up to date, or fails to meet user needs.
- Resources Accounts receive qualified opinion from the National Audit Office (NAO)

Goals	Actions	Indicators
<p>Excellence in planning and managing the services of the House</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build corporate direction and strengthen business planning. • Continue to develop a consistent corporate approach to planning and financial control, while recognising the diversity of House services. • Provide ongoing training and development on financial management, business planning and business cases (FMD); 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate objectives are clear, relevant and understood throughout the organisation (evidence from periodic staff surveys and other feedback) • Departmental plans and Estate and ICT plans prepared by April 2008, and to include explicit linkages to the corporate objectives and risks. • A new business planning system is introduced for the unified service, with regular reviews and progress reports to the Management Board by the Office of the Chief Executive/DFM • The six priority areas set out in the Corporate Business Plan are achieved • Financial arrangements are revised and implemented by April 2008 for the vesting of PICT and, in the light of changes from Tebbit, by early 2009. • Resource Framework updated and strengthened by 2008 • New policies are adhered to and the Audit Committee is satisfied with the performance of the House Service in this respect • Business cases prepared for new investments in good time in accordance with the Resource Framework reflecting corporate priorities with a quality review each year by DFM/BPG as appropriate • Feedback on training, and monitoring of quality and timeliness of areas where staff have been trained

Goals	Actions	Indicators
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<p>Resources managed effectively and in a cost-efficient way that demonstrates value for money, as well as flexibility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Develop and implement performance management and measurement system(s) during 2008/09 • Exploration of the potential for benchmarking management information with other Parliaments • Project management skills and disciplines in place in key areas, especially Estates and PICT. Review effectiveness by 31.3.09 • Develop a system of cost (overhead) attribution for pilot infrastructure from April 2008 • Key risks are addressed in corporate and departmental plans and actively managed • HAIS is maintained and accurate data input 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission’s medium-term financial strategy met • Substantial programmes of internal audit and value for money reviews each year • Recommendations implemented to the satisfaction of the Audit Committee and/or Accounting Officer. Clean audit opinions achieved each year • Synergies with the Lords Service and PICT are explored • Initial review to Management Board and widespread application at dates set by the Management Board • Regular reports of business performance indicators and risks to the Management Board (at least quarterly) – to the satisfaction of the Board • Inter Parliamentary Contact Group to report by July 2008 • All relevant staff fully trained by March 2009. Projects are successfully completed and benefits realised. • Costing estimation model developed and implement by 31.3.08 by DFM • Risk registers are reviewed quarterly/bi-annually to the satisfaction of DFM/BPG as appropriate • Relevant staff are trained and guidance provided; a quality assurance of HAIS is undertaken at least once during the financial year.
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Goals	Actions	Indicators
<p>Compliance with regulatory and financial requirements (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"> • Provide training and guidance to relevant staff on financial and regulatory requirements, and guidance kept up-to-date • Introduce International Accounting Standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accounts prepared in good time and to a high standard • Sufficient assurance available to enable the Statement of Internal Control to be signed by the Accounting Officer (annual) • Financial competence profiles developed for all specialist roles during 2008/09 and appropriate development in place by early 2009. • No legal challenges or for the House to win any legal challenges; consistent adherence to procurement guidance, Financial Procedures and Resource Framework • Audit Committee to be satisfied with the performance of the House Service in this respect; • Feedback on training, and monitoring of quality and timeliness of areas where staff have been trained • New requirements identified and responsibilities allocated • New standards are implemented from April 2008, and relevant staff understand the impact.

Supporting task IV: Maintaining the heritage

To maintain the heritage and integrity of the Palace of Westminster and other buildings, objects and documents for the benefit of future generations.

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.

Elements of this task are covered by the strategy for accommodation and works set out on pages ??-??.

Projects*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. Work has continued throughout 2007 to draw up options for tackling this work as part of a detailed feasibility study. This will form the basis of a strategic business case to be put before the authorities in both Houses in early 2008.

Hansard digitisation

The digitisation of historic Hansard volumes is on course to be completed by the end of 2007/08. As of July 2007 the contractor had supplied digital images of all Hansards back to 1803 and machine-readable text files of the Lords Hansard back to around 1910 and the Commons back to around 1960. PICT and the Library are currently exploring options for making the material available online. We have recently publishing on the internet the raw text files which have been

received to date. This is aimed at a specialist, technical audience rather than the general user. Plans for a fully functional version will be developed in due course.

Supporting task V: Information management

To ensure that information is well-managed in pursuit of the primary objectives, by exploiting technology effectively.

Information Management and ICT is one of the priority areas identified in the Commission's strategic plan. 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. The Management Board's strategy for the remainder of the planning period is set out overleaf.

PICT and the ICT Strategy

PICT supports Members in their use of ICT. PICT's role is also to advise and assist Departments and Offices in the Houses of Parliament to identify, procure and implement electronic opportunities that underpin business based change. In this respect ICT is a strategic engine of change. In addition PICT supports core ICT services to facilitate both of these functions.

Information technology is the foundation for computerised business processes, digital services, telephony, data and information management. There is a dependency on PICT for the delivery of digital and voice services. PICT services support:

- Members of both Houses and their staff, locally and remotely
- Parliamentary business processes
- Information for the public
- Links and feeds to external departments and organisations

PICT has been working on a detailed ICT strategy for Parliament, and has presented a first draft to the Joint Business Systems Board with focus on:

- More effective processes and service management of ICT to improve our customer experience
- How ICT contributes to and supports Parliament as a whole as well as key customer groups
- Strategic business drivers and meeting business requirements with appropriate and robust levels of agility
- A route map and choices ahead for the technical infrastructure
- A route map for business applications
- A route map for data management supporting information management strategies

- A route map for IT security, resilience and continuity
- A “green” strategy for ICT (supporting sustainability and energy efficiency)

SPIRE

The SPIRE programme aims to enable staff of both Houses to manage information better by use of electronic document and records management technology. The programme has made progress in identifying staff needs and starting a pilot under real working conditions. It went through a Gateway 0 review in July 2007 and will move in 2008 towards starting further pilots, completing the business case, finalising the requirement and starting procurement. Implementation is likely to start in 2009. The full cost of the programme -- subject to business case approval -- may be of the order of £10 million across both Houses over three years.

Performance measures

Performance Indicator	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08 Apr-Sep	Target
Network availability during core hours†	99.3%	99.8%	99.7%	100%	???
Library information system: availability during core hours†	99.8%	96.5%	98.5%	???	???
PICT Helpdesk: cases completed within deadline‡	97.6%	96.3%	80.6%	??? (need Sep figure)	implicit
† PIMS, the current system, replaced POLIS during 2004/05 ‡ PCD was subsumed into PICT on 1 January 2006 Figures in bold don't tally with HoCC report					

Strategy for Information Management

Our Aims for the period up to March 2011

To achieve the following goals:

- Accessibility: Members, their staff and staff of both Houses will have ready access to information, when and where they need it, without having to know where it is held
- Efficient processing: Business processes will be supported by systems and information which are well understood, straightforward, consistent and cost-effective

- Reliability and integrity: Business processes will be supported by robust and secure infrastructure and appropriate standards and policies, so that both data and technology are trusted
- Capitalising on knowledge: We will have built upon a more corporate culture by creating, sharing and using a common knowledge base which is trustworthy, up-to date, accurate and timely. Information will be treated as a corporate asset available to all who have a legitimate need for it. Re-use of information will be promoted where there is an established need. Innovative use of information will be improving business operations.

Context and Dependencies

There is a substantial overlap between the information management strategy and the other strategies for the other priority areas, to the extent that all of them rely heavily on processes for the creation, storage, retrieval and in some cases destruction of information. In particular information management has a vital relationship (and many elements in common) with the strategy for engaging the public. Over the next year the specific information management needs of each of the four new functional groupings in the House will be explored.

At the same time there are parallel developments that are relevant to the information management strategy:

- PICT has been working on a detailed ICT strategy for Parliament, for presentation to the Joint Business Systems Board.
- the House of Lords is committed to producing a House-wide information and knowledge management strategy and the strategies of the two Houses will be kept in alignment as far as possible.

Risks

- Disruption to the work of the House or other services may occur 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 may adopt unproven technologies, fail to adopt open standards or become tied to a small number of suppliers
- Business change and ICT projects may fail to take into account Parliament's capacity to support new initiatives
- Rationalisation opportunities available through improved information management may fail to build effective cooperation between departments of the House or between Houses
- Knowledge and information management initiatives may lack sufficient focus or support to bring real benefits. Strategies in overlapping areas may not be aligned
- Greater cooperation between the two Houses on information services is perceived as a loss of the distinctive service that each House has come to expect.

Goals	Actions	Indicators
<p>Accessibility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Parliament-wide digitisation policy will ensure that the benefits of future digitisation projects are maximised • By March 2008 a digital preservation strategy will be in place. This will enable Parliament to ensure that born-digital Parliamentary documentation is available for the use of Parliament and the public for foreseeable future. It will also assist Parliament to discharge its responsibilities under records, data protection and FoI legislation • By March 2010 a more coordinated approach to online information services for Members and the House will be delivered • By March 2011 the necessary conditions for a common knowledge base for Parliament will be in place. This will realise the vision of ready access to information for Members of both Houses, their staff and the staff of both Houses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future digitisation projects are consistent with the aims of the information management strategy • Arrangements for digital preservation meet relevant standards • Surveys of Members and staff indicate better awareness of available online services • Surveys of Members and staff indicate improvement in ability to locate information
<p>Efficient processing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By October 2008, in line with the Tebbit recommendation, the prospects for more joint working with the House of Lords Library will be reviewed and an action plan put in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2011, any services which are provided which are provided separately by the two Libraries are done so for clear logistical or policy reasons
<p>Reliability and integrity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning for information systems will conform to the principle of “a single version of the truth” • PICT’s ICT strategy contains a route map for achieving improvements in IT security, resilience and continuity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The data used in information systems is taken from the authoritative source • IT provision meets the various Service Level Agreements in place across the House
<p>Capitalising on knowledge</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The implications of all strategic ICT projects for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major ICT projects are consistent with the aims of

	<p>information management will be considered by an expert panel drawn from various parts of the business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By March 2009 an information audit for the Commons will be conducted if necessary and an action plan for more effective management of information and knowledge will be developed. This will take account of information management needs in each of the four new functional areas within the House service. Action on the following issues will be considered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ productivity improvements in the use of common tools such as MS Office ○ a strategy to secure more efficient management of those business processes which are based on the creation and exchange of information ○ better management of digital records ○ the encouragement of a more open culture in which sharing information is the norm 	<p>the information management strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An action plan for further developing knowledge and information management strategy is in place • This will contain measurable goals and milestones for the period to 2011 and beyond
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Supporting task VI: Working with others

To 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.

If Parliament as a whole is to function effectively, the two Houses need to work well together, while maintaining their distinct roles. In addition to PICT, a number of services are provided on a shared-service basis including Parliamentary Estates and Works, 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.