

New Business Plan for House of Commons Revealed.

Lord Glottal of Hackney yesterday outlined the results of his review of the future of the House of Commons.

Lord Glottal thanked all those at Westminster who had contributed to the review, noting particularly the useful input of MPs, political correspondents and the general public for whom a hot-line had been set up to receive their views.

He also noted the imperative, which was to save public finance in view of the current imbalance on the nation's books.

Covering 874 pages, the review's main recommendations are as follows:

1. There are currently 646 MPs but the House only has seating for 472. Lord Glottal questioned the need for so many MPs, particularly in the light of practice in other countries, where there are proportionately fewer elected representatives.

If the number of MPs were reduced to 472, the estimated saving is £147 million.

2. The House of Commons sat for only 142 days in 2008. Of these only 34 were anywhere near fully attended - to be precise, six full debates and 28 Prime Minister's Questions. The other 106 sittings were attended by only 5 or 6 MPs. These sittings could be held in an annexe, thus freeing the House for other use for a total of 186 days.

The House of Commons could then be rented out for corporate functions, festivals, chamber concerts, dinners, bingo, etc. with an estimated revenue of £74 million.

Lord Glottal has since been asked to produce a similar business plan for the House of Lords.