

REGIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

HOUSE OF COMMONS



Select Committees ...

**“to monitor the expenditure,
administration and policy of
Government Departments” (1979)**

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Modernisation Committee ...

“considering how the procedures and practices of the House should be modernised” (1997)

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Governance of Britain ...

“Both [regional ministers] and the Government’s regional policy should be subject to formal and consistent parliamentary scrutiny ... the Government believes that one means of achieving this scrutiny could be the establishment of nine regional select committees ... including effective examination of the work of regional bodies and calling Ministers to account.”

“... there is benefit in developing clear mechanisms for enhanced Parliamentary scrutiny of regional institutions ... This could be committee-based, on either the select or standing committee model... Any such Parliamentary scrutiny arrangements would be expected to take evidence from the regions, hold public hearings in the regions, and receive formal responses from both the Government and the regions to any reports which are published

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Regional Ministers...



Advise the Secretary of State on regional strategies and RDA Chairs and Boards



Represent regional interests



Facilitate a joined up approach



Champion the region



Represent the Government at regional select committee hearings etc



Terms of Reference ...



what models of accountability might work



what the role of the House should be



what resources would be needed to make regional accountability work



The Gap ...

“The challenge for us is the perception that perhaps there is not [scrutiny or accountability], or the perception that there is not sufficient transparency and scrutiny of the work that the RDAs do.”

Abby Johnson Brennan, Deputy Chief Executive EMDA

“...the Homes and Communities Agency, the Highways Agency, Network Rail, the Learning and Skills Council ... all have fundamental roles in making sure that strategy is deliverable... I think we would really welcome the opportunity not just for [the RDAs] to be scrutinised by local MPs at a national level but, also, those other agencies.”

Tom Riordan, Chair of the Chief Executives RDA network

“For me the crucial need is actually to make the regional minister more accountable than he or she is at present. There is a real failure there. I want to be able to question him in public very much indeed.”

Peter Luff MP

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Models...

 **traditional select committee**

 **grand committee**

 **hybrid**

 **new model** – including participation by co-opted members?

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Some problems ...

 **Duplication**

 **Distraction**

 **Cost and accommodation**








 **Scope**

 **Political composition**

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Some Personal Views ...

-  **'Suck it and see'**
-  **'Select Committee PLUS' is a good model**
-  **Same membership pattern as currently**
-  **It's a small price to pay!**
-  **RDAs and more**
-  **Get out and about**
-  **Be flexible and pragmatic**

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