

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUB (POLICY & RESOURCES) COMMITTEE

Thursday, 28 May 2015

Minutes of the meeting of the Public Relations and Economic Development Sub (Policy & Resources) Committee held at the Guildhall EC2 at the rising of the Policy and Resources Committee (2.45pm).

Present

Members:

Mark Boleat (Chairman)	Edward Lord
Roger Chadwick	Jeremy Mayhew
Sophie Fernandes	Deputy Catherine McGuinness
Stuart Fraser	Ian Seaton
Wendy Hyde	Alderman Sir David Wootton
	Alderman The Lord Mountevans

Officers:

John Barradell	Town Clerk and Chief Executive
Simon Murrells	Assistant Town Clerk
Simon Latham	Town Clerk's Department
Alistair MacLellan	Town Clerk's Department
Damian Nussbaum	Director of Economic Development
Tony Halmos	Director of Public Relations
Liz Skelcher	Assistant Director of Economic Development
Adam Maddock	Assistant Director of Public Relations
Isabelle Almeida	Economic Development Office
Maja Erceg	Public Relations Office
Greg Williams	Public Relations Office
Paul Double	City Remembrancer
Nigel Lefton	Director of Remembrancer's Affairs

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Deputy Doug Barrow, Sir Michael Snyder, Hugh Morris and the Lord Mayor, Alderman Alan Yarrow. Subject to their appointment under item 3, apologies had also been received from Oliver Lodge and Tom Sleigh.

The Town Clerk noted that Alderman The Lord Mountevans had been appointed to the subcommittee since the agenda papers had been published and was therefore in attendance, and that Hugh Morris was now on the subcommittee by virtue of being a Deputy Chairman of the Policy Committee. Lastly, Deputy Michael Cassidy and Deputy Alex Deane were listed on the frontispiece in error.

2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBERS**

Members agreed extend the term of the existing co-opted members for a further year, on the understanding that the four posts would then be opened to the wider membership of the Court of Common Council from 2016/17.

RESOLVED, that

- Oliver Lodge, Ian Seaton, Tom Sleight and Sophie Fernandes be appointed as co-opted members on the Public Relations and Economic Development Sub (Policy and Resources) Committee for 2015/16.

4. **MINUTES**

The public minutes of the meeting held on 19 February 2015 were approved as a correct record subject to Edward Lord being marked as present, and reference to the City of London Corporation not restricting itself from commenting on cross-sectoral issues being factored into the Economic Development Office's Business Plan (Item 8).

5. **CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION 2015 PARTY CONFERENCE ACTIVITY**

The subcommittee considered a report of the Director of Public Relations on the City of London Corporation's 2015 Party Conference Activity. Members requested that advice be provided by the Public Relations Office on what fringe events were advisable to attend.

A member emphasised that it was important to maintain engagement with the Liberal Democrats given the number of Liberal Democrat peers who would be responsible for scrutinising draft legislation in the House of Lords.

RESOLVED, that:

- The proposed City of London Corporation programme for the 2015 Party Conferences be confirmed;
- The proposed arrangements for Member attendance be agreed.

6. **IMPLICATIONS OF THE 2015 GENERAL ELECTION FOR THE CITY CORPORATION**

The subcommittee received a joint report of the Remembrancer and the Director of Public Relations on the implications of the 2015 General Election for the City of London Corporation. The Chairman commented that he had undertaken some positive political engagement since the election, including with Greg Clark (Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government), Brandon Lewis (Minister for Housing and Planning), Lord Adonis (Labour) and Lord Hill (European Commissioner for Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union).

Members then discussed the forthcoming referendum on Britain's membership of the EU. The Chairman noted his recent statement to the Court of Common Council in May 2015 had emphasised the majority view of City businesses was that the UK was better off as a member of the European Union, and that UK interests were best served by being fully engaged in EU policy making as a EU member. He acknowledged that differences of opinion existed among members of the Court of Common Council over the EU. The City of London Corporation's role in the EU referendum would therefore be decided through the committee process in the usual way.

Members noted the range of factors that would need to be considered when deciding the Corporation's position on the EU, namely the Prime Minister's efforts to secure EU reform; UK sovereignty; which industries the City of London Corporation was best placed to represent; whether the City should adopt a wider public relations message than one focused purely on financial services; and the role EU membership played in providing jobs in the UK.

RESOLVED, that:

- The City of London Corporation's position on UK membership of the European Union be the subject of further discussion and debate, including at the Policy and Resources Committee; and
- A copy of the Chairman's recent response to Court of Common Council regarding Europe be circulated to members.

7. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS AND POLICY ISSUES AFFECTING LONDON

The subcommittee received a joint report of the Remembrancer and the Directors of Economic Development and Public Relations on political developments and policy issues affecting London. In response to a comment from the Chairman on the critical importance of housing policy to London, a member commented that the Conservative pledge to extend Right to Buy to housing association stock would potentially undermine the ability of housing associations to raise finance at AAA rates, and therefore consideration should be given to the City of London Corporation being be involved in any such debate.

Members noted that both Zac Goldsmith MP and Stephen Greenhalgh were likely Conservative candidates for the London Mayoral elections in 2016.

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8. UPDATE AND FORWARD LOOK ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL REGULATORY STEERING GROUP (IRSG)

The subcommittee received an update report of the Director of Economic Development on activity of the International Regulatory Strategy Group since February 2015.

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9. **REVIEW OF EU ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY**

The subcommittee received a review of EU engagement events since February 2015. The Chairman took the opportunity to request that an equivalent document be provided, on a regular basis, for the City of London Corporation's political engagement programme.

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10. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE**

There were no questions.

11. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT
Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Bill**

A member noted that this Bill had implications for social investment and therefore the City of London Corporation should be proactive in engaging with government during its passage through Parliament.

12. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

RESOLVED – that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 7a of Schedule 12A of the Act.

13. **Update from the Town Clerk**

The Town Clerk was heard on a confidential matter.

The meeting closed at 3.50 pm

Chairman

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