

Committee(s)	Dated:
Public Relations and Economic Development Sub-Committee	5 March 2019
Subject: Corporate Affairs Update	Public
Report of: Bob Roberts, Director of Communications	For Information
Report author: Meghan Green, Corporate Affairs Officer	

Summary

This report provides a monthly update of the Corporate Affairs Team's activities, supporting the City Corporation's strategic political engagement.

The Corporate Affairs team coordinates and organises the City Corporation's political engagement and seeks to support both Members and Officers in its delivery, with a particular focus on the activity undertaken by the Policy Chair and Lord Mayor.

The activities documented in this report focus largely on those lead by the Corporate Affairs team. Activities undertaken in partnership with other teams and departments are also included and have been appropriately termed.

The timeframe of this report spans the period lapsed between the previous and current meetings of this Sub Committee.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note this report.

Main Report

Strategic Objectives/engagement

1. Based on developments in the domestic political and economic landscape and in line with the City Corporation's corporate priorities, the Corporate Affairs team has focused its activity in the following areas.

Brexit

2. Following the Meaningful Vote in Parliament on the Government's Withdrawal Agreement and Political Declaration on the future relationship between the United Kingdom (UK) and the European Union (EU), the Corporate Affairs team:
 - a. Continued to monitor latest political developments in the UK and EU;
 - b. Evaluated the various possible outcomes following the rejection of the Withdrawal Agreement by Members of Parliament;
 - c. Contributed to Brexit updates for the Policy Chair and Lord Mayor;
 - d. Worked across the City Corporation's various departments to ensure all Brexit-related engagement with the Government is coherently organised and strategically conducted;

- e. Reviewed the Brexit contingency plans of other City Corporation departments alongside the Media Team;
- f. Documented high-level Brexit-related engagement undertaken by all Corporation departments on behalf of the Town Clerk.

London – Local engagement and London promotion

3. The Corporate Affairs team seeks to develop and encourage City Corporation engagement with the rest of London beyond the Square Mile. To this end, the Corporate Affairs team:
 - a. Continued to develop work on a London borough engagement programme for the Policy Chair. Visits this month include the London boroughs of Redbridge and Enfield, accompanied by their respective council leaders;
 - b. Briefed the Policy Chair on London Councils and Central London Forward board meetings and work strands;
 - c. Briefed the Policy Chair for a meeting with Mike Brown, Commissioner at Transport for London;
 - d. Contributed to, and organised, the Policy Chair's submission to the series of essays being collated by the Fabian Society on the challenges for London in the 2020s. The City Corporation is sponsoring this project;
 - e. Finalised plans with the publishing house Guy Fox for the educational children's book about the City that the Corporation has agreed to sponsor;

Domestic Political Engagement

4. A key aim of the political engagement organised and undertaken by the Corporate Affairs team is to foster productive dialogue between the City Corporation and key decision-makers in government – at local, regional and national levels. To this end, the City Corporation:

National Engagement

- a. Assisted the Remembrancer's team in briefing the Policy Chair ahead of a parliamentary roundtable with the Scottish National Party;
- b. Drafted a letter on behalf of the Policy Chair to the Culture Secretary Rt Hon Jeremy Wright MP on the City Corporation's arts and culture community outreach programmes. This is borne out of the Policy Chair's meeting with the Secretary of State at Davos in January;
- c. Prepared a briefing for, and attended, a phone call between the Policy Chair and Emma Little-Pengelly MP, Democratic Unionist Party Member for Belfast South.

Regional Engagement

- d. Continued preparations for the Policy Chair's political visit to Cardiff as part of the Corporation's regional strategy;
- e. Drafted the Policy Chair's remarks for the Belfast City Council reception as part of the Corporation's collaborative work on the Belfast Regions City Deal;
- f. Advised the Economic Development Office on a letter to Rt Hon Karen Bradley MP, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, with regard to the Belfast Region City Deal.

International Engagement

5. Where relevant, the Corporate Affairs team assists the City Corporation's overseas engagements, such as those undertaken by the Policy Chair and Lord Mayor. To this end, the Corporate Affairs team:

- a. Drafted the Policy Chair's speaking remarks at the European Financial Forum, a convening of Nordic Baltic Ambassadors and a meeting with the Dutch Ambassador;
- b. Began contributing to the MIPIM briefing pack alongside the City Surveyor's Department.

Think Tanks and Third-Party organisations

6. As part of the City Corporation's engagement with think tanks, the City Corporation:
 - a. Continued to work closely with New Financial on the Women in Finance Charter Annual Review, which will be held in Guildhall on 14 March;
 - b. Commenced work with Centre for Policy Studies on the upcoming Thatcher Conference after receiving approval from the Policy & Resources Committee;
 - c. Continued work with Bright Blue on its 'Fixing the Future' conference to be held at Guildhall. Education Secretary Damian Hinds MP will act as guest speaker;
 - d. Initiated discussions with the Fabian Society on a project that will consider how investment in arts and culture can deliver wider socio-economic goals;
 - e. Organised and held a meeting with Labour Business to discuss future partnership opportunities following the Labour Business dinner hosted at Guildhall in December.

Party Conferences

7. In preparation of the City Corporation's attendance at the 2019 party conferences, the Corporate Affairs team:
 - a. Visited event venues in Bournemouth, Brighton, and Manchester ahead of the Liberal Democrat, Labour and Conservative party conferences.
 - b. Initiated discussions with think tanks on potential partnerships over party conference.

Meghan Green

Corporate Affairs Officer, Town Clerk's Department

T: 020 7332 1754

E: Meghan.Green@cityoflondon.gov.uk