

Committee(s)	Dated:
Public Relations and Economic Development Sub-Committee	7 March 2019
Subject: Parliamentary Team update	Public
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Summary

This report has been prepared to update Members on the main elements of the Parliamentary Team's activity in support of the City of London Corporation's political and parliamentary engagement. An oral update will be provided at the meeting on the Brexit parliamentary programme.

This report spans the period since the last meeting of the Public Relations and Economic Development Sub Committee on 5 February.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report.

Main Report

1. The Government was defeated (303-258) on a non-binding motion that reaffirmed support for continued negotiations on 'alternative arrangements' to the 'backstop' as outlined in the motion passed on 29 January. The next vote on the 'next steps' motion on the Government's negotiation strategy is scheduled to take place on 27 February. This is to be differentiated from the next 'meaningful vote' on the proposed Withdrawal Agreement, the date for which is anticipated to be no later than 12 March. An oral update will be provided on the Brexit parliamentary programme at the meeting.

Legislation

2. The Office is undertaking preparatory work on a private bill relating to the relocation of the City Corporation's markets and on a separate private member's bill on air quality in London. It is working with London Councils on the air quality bill.
3. The Financial Services (Implementation of Legislation) Bill has passed its Second Reading in the Commons and at the time of writing is awaiting Committee Stage. Justice Select Committee Chairman Bob Neill (Con) asked about the City's concerns about scope and the way specific EU legislation not included in the Bill (such as the Securities Financing Transactions Regulations) would be dealt with. He received the reassurances sought on their intended treatment from Treasury Secretary Mel Stride. There is an outstanding issue

about stakeholder consultation which is being followed up in correspondence. There have also been several technically important statutory instruments relating to the financial sector including 'no deal' provisions on insolvency and contracts where specific drafting on procedural points have been addressed.

4. The Lords completed the Trade Bill's Committee Stage. At the time of writing the Bill's Report Stage is awaited, owing to an unfulfilled Opposition motion requiring the Government to consult on the Bill's scrutiny provisions in order for it to progress.

Debates and Briefings

5. The Office provided briefing notes to targeted MPs and Peers ahead of the following debates:
 - The UK as a financial services hub held by Bim Afolami (Con) on 6 February. Sections of the briefing note were widely quoted by MPs from all parties. Junior Treasury Minister Robert Jenrick also noted the City Corporation's total tax contribution report in his winding up of the debate;
 - Future free trade agreements between the UK, Australia, New Zealand, the US and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) on 21 February;
 - Immigration Procedures on 14 February. Lord Mountevans raised the City Corporation's recommendations to improve the visa process. His contribution received cross-party support and was noted by Baroness Barran in her winding up of the debate for the Government.
6. Briefing notes for the following parliamentary questions:
 - Shadow DEFRA Minister Baroness Jones' on resources for transit good inspections in the event of a 'no deal' Brexit on 7 February. Baroness Jones raised the issues highlighted in the briefing note and this has been followed up with a meeting request;
 - Baroness Seccombe's (Con) on vehicle air pollution reduction and the impact of children's health on 18 February;
 - Lord Roberts' (Libdem) on the staffing of tourism and hospitality projects following the UK's withdrawal from the EU, on 19 February.
7. Office representatives supported and attended a parliamentary drop-in session, co-ordinated by London First, linked to the Government's immigration proposals. Representatives from the London Chamber of Commerce, techUK, and other professional bodies were also present. Working with EDO, this event was an opportunity to promote the City Corporation's visa research to MPs and peers. Direct discussions were had with, among others, former Chief Secretary to the Treasury Greg Hands (Con) and Rushanara Ali (Lab).

8. The Office has arranged, and will support, the following:

- a roundtable meeting between the Policy Chair, financial industry figures and SNP MPs to discuss issues affecting financial and professional services in Scotland and the wider UK on 27 February;
- a meeting between the Policy Chair, Sir Roger Gifford and Lord Teverson (Libdem), Chairman of the Lords EU Sub-Committee on Energy and the Environment, to discuss green finance, port health and air quality on 5 March.

Public Bill and Select Committees

9. The Office made submissions to:

- The Public Bill Committee on the Immigration and Social Security Co-ordination (EU Withdrawal) Bill;
- The Ministry of Justice's review of enforcement agents and this was copied to the Justice Select Committee which is running a limited inquiry into the matter;
- The Lords EU Sub-Committee on Energy and the Environment Committee's inquiry into Brexit and plant and animal biosecurity following the Government's response to the inquiry's report.

10. Working with EDO, the Office is preparing a submission to the Treasury Select Committee's inquiry into the future of financial services.

11. The Office also briefed members of the following committees:

- Lords EU Sub-Committee on Home Affairs on the City Corporation's visa research ahead of a one-off inquiry into future EU migration to the UK;
- Lords EU Sub-Committee on Financial Affairs on the City Corporation's 'cliff-edge' concerns regarding contract continuity, data, trading venue recognition and support for small businesses ahead of a one-off evidence session with Andrew Bailey, Chief Executive of the Financial Conduct Authority.

All-Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs)

12. The Office facilitated guests and a panellist for the London APPG meeting on Brexit and London's businesses. The panel, co-chaired by MPs Steve Reed (Lab) and Bob Neill (Con), included Rachel Kent (Hogan Lovells), Mark Reynolds (construction firm Mace), and Seth Williams (Association of British Insurers).

13. Office representatives attended a meeting of the Arts and Heritage APPG. The meeting, chaired by Lord Crathorne (Con), heard from Sir Nicholas Kenyon and Kathryn McDowell about the Culture Mile initiative and proposals for a new Centre for Music at the Museum of London site.
14. The Office supported the briefing ahead of the Policy Chair's attendance at the British-American Parliamentary Group's reception for the US Ambassador to the UK, including identifying key strategic attendees.

GLA and the Regions

15. Office representatives attended a meeting of the GLA's EU Exit Group, which questioned witnesses on NHS and London Resilience 'no deal' Brexit preparations.
16. A press release concerning the City Corporation's 'All Change at Bank' project was circulated to GLA Transport Committee members and officers.

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