

<b>Committee(s):</b> Public Relations and Economic Development Sub (Policy & Resources) Committee	<b>Dated:</b> 11/02/2021
<b>Subject:</b> Public Relations and Economic Development Sub (Policy & Resources) six-month media update	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	<b>[insert relevant number(s) from Corporate Plan outcomes listed below]</b>
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?</b>	
<b>Report of:</b> Bob Roberts, Director of Communications	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Aisha Musad, Media Office Assistant	

### **City's Corporate Plan**

#### ***Contribute to a flourishing society***

1. *People are safe and feel safe.*
2. *People enjoy good health and wellbeing.*
3. *People have equal opportunities to enrich their lives and reach their full potential.*
4. *Communities are cohesive and have the facilities they need.*

#### ***Support a thriving economy***

5. *Businesses are trusted and socially and environmentally responsible.*
6. *We have the world's best legal and regulatory framework and access to global markets.*
7. *We are a global hub for innovation in finance and professional services, commerce and culture.*
8. *We have access to the skills and talent we need.*

#### ***Shape outstanding environments***

9. *We are digitally and physically well-connected and responsive.*
10. *We inspire enterprise, excellence, creativity and collaboration.*
11. *We have clean air, land and water and a thriving and sustainable natural environment.*
12. *Our spaces are secure, resilient and well-maintained*

## **Summary**

This report summarises the media output from the City of London Corporation's Media Team between July and December 2020.

It shows there have been 1,583 articles relating to the City of London Corporation in national and local newspapers with the advertising value equivalent of £6,269,360. This is up £1,020,514 from the previous six months.

We have also tried to add some qualitative analysis of the media coverage in this report.

### **Recommendation(s)**

Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

### **Main Report**

#### **Background**

1. The Weekly Media Summary produced every Friday measures and records the main print, broadcast and digital media output of the Media Team. It is distributed to Members and senior officers.
2. This report collates and summarises the findings of the Weekly Media Summary from July 2020 to December 2020.

#### **Current Position**

##### **Print**

3. There have been over 1,583 articles relating to the City of London Corporation in national, regional and local newspapers in the six months covered by the report.
4. Advertising Value Equivalent (equivalent if we paid for coverage) is £6,269,360 (this excludes radio, TV broadcasting and international print coverage).
5. Additionally, there have been at least 163 articles in international media which are not collated by our cuttings agency.

##### **Broadcast**

6. There have been at least 14 pieces of broadcast media coverage including *BBC London News*, *BBC Radio 4 news*, *BBC Radio 5 news* and *BBC Radio 4's Today Programme*.

##### **Digital**

7. The corporate Twitter feed now has 50,489k followers - Up by 1,198 in the last six months.
8. Our corporate Facebook pages have 94,728 followers- Up 5,016 in the last six months.
9. Our corporate LinkedIn page now has 21,855 followers. By comparison, the Greater London Authority has 18,700 and Westminster has 13,625 followers.
10. The most visited page on the corporate website between July and December 2020 was Hampstead Heath with 221,936 views.

##### **Options**

11. None.

## Proposals

12. None.

## Key Data

13. See current position.

## Subject and Qualitative Analysis:

### 14. COVID-19

The majority of coverage achieved was around COVID-19. Both internationally and nationally, the Lord Mayor and Policy Chair were frequently quoted and interviewed in major media such as the *Financial Times*, *City A.M*, *Reuters*, *Financial News*, *BBC Radio*, *Yahoo News!*, *The New York Times*, *Bloomberg*, *Evening Standard*, *CNN*, *City Matters*, *Guardian*, *The Times*, *The Sunday Times*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The i*, *Property Week*, and *The Sun*.

*Property Week* ran an opinion piece from the Chair of the Planning and Transportation Committee, on the City's adaptability and resilience through the COVID-19 pandemic. The Planning Chair was also interviewed by *EGI* further highlighting the continuing resilience of the City in attracting developers and investors.

Qualitative analysis: Coverage was factual and neutral in tone, with generally straight reporting of the City Corporation's positions on major issues such as return to the workplace and in communicating government guidelines to the public and key stakeholders.

However, the tone was largely downbeat about the City's immediate future due to the restrictions requiring people to work from home.

### 15. UK-EU relations

Widespread coverage of Policy Chair Catherine McGuinness' response to the UK-EU trade deal, including in *The Daily Telegraph*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Evening Standard*, *Yahoo! Finance*, *Le Monde*, *L'Echo*, *El Confidencial*, *Le Temps*, *Reuters*, *FE News*, *Yahoo! News*, *City Matters*, *Asia Times*, *Asia insurance Post*, *Head Topics Singapore*, *One America News Network*, *Morning Star*.

The coverage in both domestic and international media carried the City Corporation's position, with interviews and statements from the Policy Chair issued at key moments during the negotiations

Qualitative analysis: Coverage was factual in tone but negative regarding the outlook for City after exiting the European Union.

Much of the coverage reflected the fact that financial services had not carried as much influence in the negotiations as other sectors.

#### 16. Climate Action strategy

Coverage on the Climate Action Strategy and the City of London Corporation's commitment to achieve net zero carbon emissions across the City was included in a number of national, London and trade media outlets including the *Financial Times*, *Bloomberg*, *City A.M*, *Financial News*, *Business Green*, *City Matters*, *Private Equity News*, *FutureNetZero* and *London Loves Business*.

Qualitative analysis: Coverage was positive in tone with media reporting the City Corporation's aim to reduce net carbon emissions in the Square Mile to zero by 2040, a decade ahead of Government targets. However, the scale of the coverage was less than we would have hoped for given the importance of the strategy.

#### 17. Tackling Racism Taskforce

- a. Coverage on the City of London Corporation's launch of a three-month consultative exercise on cultural landmarks with historic links to racism and slavery was included in a number of national, international and London media outlets including *BBC London News*, *Evening Standard*, *The Times*, *Daily Mirror*, *LBC News*, *BBC News*, *Daily Mail*, *CNN*, *The Independent*, *The i*, *Financial News*, *Londonist*, *MyLondon*, *New York Times*, *Reuters*, *Financial News*, *City A.M* and *City Matters*. Andrien Meyers and Caroline Addy, Co-Chairs of the City Corporation's Tackling Racism Taskforce, were quoted in some of the coverage.
- b. *The Times*, *BBC News* and *Daily Mail* reported that the Sir John Cass's Foundation Primary School, the City of London Corporation's maintained school, changing its name to The Aldgate School. Caroline Addy, Co-Chair of the Tackling Racism Taskforce, was quoted.
- c. Coverage was included in *The Independent* and *Londonist* in a piece looking at the City of London Corporation's research paper, *Black and Asian Women in the City of London 1600-1860*. Co-Chair of the City of London Corporation's Tackling Racism Taskforce, Caroline Addy, was quoted.
- d. Andrien Meyers, Co-Chair of the City of London Corporation's Tackling Racism Taskforce was quoted in the *Financial Times* about the City of London Corporation's support for the Charter for Black Talent in Finance and the Professions, which aims to drive up representation of black people in senior positions in the finance and professional services sectors.

Qualitative analysis: Coverage was neutral in tone with balanced reporting – often placed in the context of the national debate around landmarks with links to slavery. Although mainly neutral in tone, the coverage has sent the message we are taking strong action on tackling racism and boosting diversity and inclusivity. This message has been disseminated to a very wide audience.

Note that coverage analysis of the January 20201 decision by the Policy and Resources Committee to remove and re-site statues of two prominent figures in the City of London with links to the Transatlantic slave trade will be provided in the next report to this committee.

#### 17. London Recharged

Media coverage of the City of London Corporation's 'London Recharged' report featured in a front-page *Financial Times* story and an editorial in the same outlet. Further coverage in *Sky News*, *Bloomberg*, *The Sun*, *Evening Standard*, *Sunday Telegraph*, *City A.M.*, *Financial News* and many online outlets. The Policy Chair also wrote in *City A.M.* about the report.

Qualitative analysis: Overwhelmingly positive coverage in the *Financial Times* spread across different parts of the newspaper, including an editorial describing it as a "vibrant vision of the City of London's future".

#### 19. Planning and Transportation:

*City AM* reported the number of planning applications in the City of London in November exceeded pre-pandemic levels, showing investor confidence in the district. Chair of the Planning and Transportation Committee, Alastair Moss, was quoted. Further coverage in *City Matters*, *Building Design*, *Construction Enquirer* and *Building*.

The *Evening Standard*, *City A.M*, *City Matters* and *MSN* reported on how the City of London Corporation is relaxing elements of the al fresco dining policy, in an attempt to help hospitality venues through the winter. Chair of the Planning and Transportation Committee, Alastair Moss, and Chairman of the Licensing Committee, Sophie Fernandes, were quoted.

*City A.M*, *Estates Gazette*, *City Matters*, *Logistics Today* and The World News Monitor reported on the City Corporation partnering with Amazon Logistics to transform part of an underused carpark into the Square Mile's first Last Mile Logistics Hub. Planning and Transportation Chair Alastair Moss was quoted.

The *Financial Times* wrote an article about the City of London Corporation's creation of a virtual reality map of the Square Mile. Chair of the Planning and Transportation Committee, Alastair Moss, was quoted. Further coverage achieved in *Estates Gazette*, *City Matters* and *PlaceTech*.

*The Times* mentioned the City of London Corporation in relation to a decision by London's mayor Sadiq Khan to block plans for the 1,000ft (305m) Tulip tower proposed for Bury Street. Further widespread coverage including *City A.M*, *BBC News*, *Guardian*, *Daily Mirror*, *Telegraph*, *Times* (£), *ITV News*, *Daily Mail*, *Evening Standard*, *Daily Mirror*, *Metro*, *Financial News* (£), and *Bloomberg*.

Qualitative analysis: Largely positive coverage with a focus on innovative measures taken, such as the Amazon Last Mile Logistics Hub and virtual reality planning tool.

Data showing that planning applications had returned to their pre-pandemic peak was well received given it ran contrary to the short-term negativity about the City office market. There was some criticism of the decision to grant approval to the Tulip following the Mayor of London rejecting the scheme, prior to the public inquiry starting.

## 20. Education

Extensive coverage was achieved in national, London and local media on reports that four A-Level students from Newham Collegiate Sixth Form won places at Ivy League universities and scholarships worth £1 million. The school is part of the City of London Academies Trust. Coverage was included in *The Times*, *BBC Radio London*, *Financial Times*, *Daily Mail*, *Metro*, *Daily Express*, *The Sun*, *Evening Standard*, *Newham Recorder*, *BBC London News* and *ITV London News*.

Coverage of the successes of A-Level and BTEC students from the City of London Academies Trust were further celebrated in a number of media outlets including *Good Morning Britain*, *The Sun*, *The Guardian*, *The Daily Telegraph* and *New Statesman*.

The *Evening Standard* and *City A.M.* reported on the City of London Corporation providing Square Mile schoolchildren with food vouchers during half-term break. The Policy Chair was quoted.

Qualitative analysis: Coverage on exam results was positive, with a strong focus on individual ‘success story’ case studies. Reporting often positioned the City of London Academies Trust schools as a vehicle for social mobility for young Londoners. This included four teenagers from Newham Collegiate Sixth Form Centre who achieved offers from Ivy League universities and scholarships worth £1 million (*The Times*), and a City of London Academy Highbury Grove pupil who was one of a handful of youngsters from low-income backgrounds to receive a Rothschild and Co bursary which will pay for her degree expenses (*Islington Tribune*).

## 21. Open Spaces:

### a. Reopening Hampstead Heath

News on the reopening of Hampstead Heath’s swimming facilities following COVID-19-enforced closure appeared in over 650 media outlets across the UK and globally, including *The Guardian*, *LBC News*, *ITV*, *Sky News*, *Daily Mail*, *Evening Standard*, *New York Times Post* and *Swimmers Daily*. Anne Fairweather, Chair of the City Corporation’s Hampstead Heath Management Committee, was interviewed and quoted in most of the coverage.

Qualitative analysis: Coverage was overwhelmingly positive and included wide reporting of measures put in place by the City Corporation to protect swimmers. This included limiting numbers, staggered sessions, deep cleaning, a new online-booking system and specialist training for lifeguards. *The Guardian* reported one swimmer as saying they felt “really safe”.

b. New swimming charges at Hampstead Heath

Coverage of the introduction of compulsory charges at Hampstead Heath swimming ponds was featured in national and local media outlets including *BBC Radio London*, *Telegraph*, *Yahoo News!*, *Evening Standard* *ITV London* and *Ham & High*.

Qualitative analysis: Although reporting was generally balanced, coverage was usually negative and carried criticism from campaigning swimming groups opposed to the charges. This included claims of a negative impact on vulnerable, low-income and LGBT+ swimmers (various); of a "coronavirus cash grab" (*Daily Telegraph*); and that the City Corporation was "killing our culture" (*Evening Standard*).

c. Finsbury Circus opens

*The Londonist* and *Horticulture Week* reported on the reopening of London's first public park, Finsbury Circus Gardens, after over a decade of closure due to Crossrail. A story about the winner of an architecture design competition to generate proposals for the space was also covered in a number of London and trade media including *City A.M*, *Architects Journal*, *Estates Gazette*, *BD online*, *Building News*, *Building*, *Horticulture Week*. and *City Matters*.

Qualitative analysis: Coverage was positive, with reporting focusing on the City Corporation's vision for a biodiverse, 21st century park which respects the historic nature of the site.

d. Illegal fungi foraging

Extensive coverage about recent prosecutions at Epping Forest for illegal fungi foraging was included in national, London and regional media outlets including *The Telegraph*, *The Times*, *The Metro*, *BBC London*, *Daily Mirror*, *The Sun*, *City Matters*, *Epping Forest Guardian* and *the Yorkshire Post*. Chairman on the Epping Forest and Commons Committee, Graeme Doshi-Smith, was quoted in most of the coverage.

Qualitative analysis: Coverage was positive, presenting the City Corporation as an effective conservator of the ancient woodland and its complex biodiversity.

e. Visitor numbers on Epping Forest

*BBC Radio Essex* ran an interview with Jeremy Dagley, Head of Conservation at Epping Forest, to discuss the news that Epping Forest saw a 250% increase visitor numbers during the COVID-19 lockdown. Further coverage was included in *Horticulture Week*.

Qualitative analysis: Coverage was positive, showcasing Epping Forest as an important site for Londoners' physical and mental health during the pandemic.

f. Awards

*Horticulture Week* and *Newham Recorder* reported that the City Corporation won seven awards in this year's 'London in Bloom' Awards. Chairman of the City of London Corporation's Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee, Oliver Sells QC, was quoted in both pieces.

Coverage was also included in *Ham & High*, *Newham Recorder*, *City Matters*, *Epping Forest Guardian*, *Windsor Observer* and *Slough Observer* about the City's parks and green spaces that have been awarded Green Flag Award status, recognising them as some of the best managed open spaces in the world.

Qualitative analysis: Coverage was positive, positioning the City Corporation as a major green spaces provider in London and South East England.

## 22. City Bridge Trust:

Widespread coverage was received in London and trade media including interviews on BBC Radio London on a City Bridge Trust grant to Islington-based Octopus Community Network to tackle food poverty, and on the funder's work with The Prince's Trust. Regular coverage in local media such as the Islington Gazette, East London Advertiser, Sutton & Croydon Guardian and South London Press included stories on grants to Access Sport, to deliver inclusive sport, and Reaching Higher, to boost the life prospects of vulnerable young people.

City Bridge Trust has taken a leading role in helping charities and communities through Covid-19 through more flexible funding, small grants to existing grantees and over £15 million allocated to the London Community Response Fund (LCRF). This work was widely reported, including a double-page interview with the City Bridge Trust Committee Chairman in Charity Times and coverage in Gay Star News – one of the leading LGBT media outlets – of £1 million funding for LGBT charities through the LCRF.

Qualitative analysis: Grant-based coverage was positive, with media interventions aligned to priorities outlined in City Bridge Trust's Bridging Divides funding strategy.

Media coverage on the London Community Response Fund showcased the organisation's role in supporting charities during the pandemic.

## 23. Overseas visits:

There was UK national, London and widespread international coverage of the Lord Mayor's virtual visits to international markets including Australia, Japan and North America.

Qualitative analysis: Coverage was factual focusing on trade ties in areas such as green finance and fintech, with a focus on how the UK is trying to strengthen links with other markets as it exited the European Union. The City's relationship with China attracted some criticism in the context of Hong Kong and human rights.

## 24. Freedom of the City

Coverage was included in *BBC TV London*, *BBC Radio London*, *Evening Standard* and *City Matters* about the Freedom of the City of London for four members of frontline staff and the Chief Executive of St. Barts Hospital, in recognition of their work during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Qualitative analysis: Coverage was positive, carrying a tribute from the Lord Mayor and the City Corporation to the St Bart's staff and all NHS key workers.

## 25. Arts and Culture

*Evening Standard*, *City Matters*, *The Stage* and *Broadway World* reported on Guildhall Art Gallery's exhibition, Noël Coward: Art & Style, which profiles the personal style of the celebrated playwright, actor, singer, composer and director. Chair of the City of London Corporation's Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee, Wendy Hyde, and Principal Curator of Guildhall Art Gallery, Liz Scott, were quoted in some of the coverage.

Qualitative analysis: Coverage was positive, providing Guildhall Art Gallery with London and national prominence.

## 26. Lord Mayor's Show

Coverage about the announcement of the cancellation of the Lord Mayor's Show was featured in several London-based and national media outlets, including *Evening Standard*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *Metro*, *City A.M.*, *City Matters*, *Financial News*, *LBC* and *Bloomberg News*. The Lord Mayor, Policy Chair, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Lord Mayor's Show Ltd and Pageantmaster of the Lord Mayor's Show were frequently quoted.

Qualitative analysis: Coverage was neutral and carried important public safety messaging.

Other coverage achieved:

## 27. Foster Lane Centre

Marianne Fredricks, Chair of the City of London Corporation Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Committee was interviewed on *BBC Radio 4's The Patch*, as part of a documentary on the YHA hostel in St Pauls. The programme had also been previewed in *The Guardian*.

Qualitative analysis: Reporting was balanced and neutral, bringing the City Corporation's efforts support for the Square Mile's homeless population to a national audience.

## **Conclusion**

28. Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

## **Appendices**

None

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