

Committee(s)	Dated:
Public Relations and Economic Development Sub-Committee	11 February 2021
Subject: Parliamentary Team Update	Public
Report of: Paul Double, City Remembrancer	For Information
Report author: William Stark, Parliamentary Engagement Officer	

Summary

This summary updates Members on the main elements of the Parliamentary Team's activity in support of the City of London Corporation's political and Parliamentary engagement since the last update in January 2021. Given continued national Coronavirus restrictions, Parliament continues to sit using a mix of virtual and in-person proceedings, with much reduced physical presence at the Palace of Westminster. Owing to limited virtual participation facilities, Westminster Hall debates and Private Members' Bill Friday sittings in the Commons and Lords have been suspended.

The summary is written with reference to the top line Parliamentary objectives and deliverables of the Remembrancer's Office. For the Committee's reference, these are set out in the appendix.

Recommendation

Members are recommended to note the report.

Main Report

Legislation Pertaining to the UK's Future EU Relationship (Objective 1)

1. Legislation in several areas is particularly affected by the UK's departure from the EU, examples include:

Trade Bill – At the time of writing, the Bill is shuttling between Commons and Lords. Currently, disagreements remain over the extent of parliamentary scrutiny of trade deals and whether trade deals should be curtailed where a court has determined that a state has committed genocide.

Financial Services Bill – This framework Bill's objective is to ensure that the UK's regulatory framework continues to function effectively for the UK after leaving the EU. The Office provided a Second Reading briefing to a number of MPs in the Commons and a separate briefing to Peers for the recent Second Reading in the Lords. The Office facilitated the Policy Chair's oral evidence session to the Public Bill Committee.

Corporation legislation (Objective 2)

2. The Emissions Reduction (Local Authorities in London) Bill, which had its First Reading in the Lords on 13 January 2020, still awaits a date for Second Reading following the disruption to parliamentary business caused by the pandemic. The Bill creates discretionary powers for London's local authorities to control emissions from combustion plants where the air quality in their area exceeds World Health Organization Guidelines and they choose to declare their area an 'air quality improvement area'. Following the suspension of proceedings on the Environment Bill as noted in the following paragraph, the possibility of progressing the Private Members Bill in the Lords has been investigated. At the time of writing this possibility has been terminated owing to a decision not to hold Friday Private Members' Bill sessions. The situation is being monitored.
3. Consideration of the Environment Bill has been postponed to the next parliamentary session, following a carry-over motion in the Commons. The delay has been attributed to pressures on the parliamentary timetable and changes to parliamentary procedure as a result of the pandemic. In liaison with London Councils, the Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee and the Chair of the Port Health and Environmental Services Committee, the Office is planning to table new clauses to the Bill in the Lords, mirroring the provisions of the Emissions Reduction (Local Authorities in London) Bill if the Lords' Private Members' Bill referred to in the previous paragraph cannot progress.
4. Work continues in respect of the Private Bill required to enable the relocation of the Corporation's wholesale markets to the new site at Dagenham Dock. Substantial support is being given to the programme directorate in collating and building the evidence basis and support for a bill promotion.

Parliamentary and Government Inquiries (Objective 3)

5. The Office has submitted the following pieces of written evidence to Select Committees since the last report:
 - to the International Trade Committee's inquiry into Digital Trade and Data.
 - to the Lords EU Services Sub-Committee's inquiry into the future EU-UK relationship in trade in services.
 - to the Lords EU Good Sub-Committee's inquiry into the future EU-UK relationship in trade in goods. The short submission highlighted port health concerns regarding increases in checks on goods and training of new staff.
 - A submission to the APPG on the Night Time Economy, setting out the City Corporation's approach to the night time economy, and measures to support local hospitality businesses during the pandemic.
6. Assistant Commissioner for Economic and Cybercrime at the City of London Police Angela McLaren gave evidence to the Treasury Select Committee as part of their inquiry into economic crime. The session focused predominantly on fraud, with Assistant Commissioner McLaren responding to questions on the

implementation of the Government's economic crime plan, the performance of Action Fraud and the implementation of recommendations made in the Craig Mackey report. Further written evidence is likely to be provided to the Committee in due course.

7. Managing Director of the City's Brussels Office, Nick Collier, and Chief Executive of TheCityUK Miles Celic gave evidence to the Lords EU Services Committee as part of its inquiry into trade in services in the context of the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement. The session covered a number of issues, from the preparedness of the sector for the end of transition, to the financial services MoU under negotiation. Peers were particularly interested in the panel's views on equivalence.

Responding to Issues Raised in Parliament and Enhancing Parliamentary Engagement (Objectives 4 and 5)

8. The Office contacted a number of parliamentary stakeholders to promote the release of the 13th edition of the Total Tax Contribution (TTC) report. An embargoed copy of the report was provided to relevant committee chairs, with the report distributed to a wider group of parliamentarians upon publication. The report's findings will be used regularly in parliamentary briefings to highlight the contribution of the FS sector to the UK's economy and tax income.
9. MPs were provided with a full briefing ahead of a general debate on Global Britain. The briefing covered a wide range of areas, including trade, international regulatory coherence, climate leadership and the City Corporation's contribution to the UK's soft power.
10. Selected Peers were provided with a briefing ahead of the Second Reading of the National Security and Investment Bill. The briefing set out the City Corporation's general position on the Bill and signposted briefing materials prepared by a range of City stakeholders for the assistance of contributors.
11. Peers were provided with a briefing ahead of the Second Reading of the Financial Services Bill. The briefing set out the City Corporation's position on the Bill and relayed more general City views as reported in briefing materials prepared by City stakeholders.
12. City MP Nickie Aiken received a response to her written question on the impact of the end of the transition period on port health authorities. The question was tabled following concerns raised with her by the Office in consultation with Port Health.
13. Former Lord Mayor Lord Mountevans was provided with a briefing on the role of the Armed Forces in supporting Global Britain ahead of a debate on the matter. The briefing noted the City Corporation's long association and support for the Armed Forces and proposals for the Lord Mayor to engage with HMS Queen Elizabeth as part of his overseas visits programme.

14. The Office prepared other briefings for MPs and peers since the last report:
 - to Peers ahead of a question on the UK's ambitions for its presidency of the G7. The briefing reflected a recent IRSG paper considering financial services priorities for the UK's G7 presidency.
 - to Peers ahead of a question on the Government's tree planting. The briefing set out the City Corporation's tree custodian role at Burnham Beeches, Epping Forest, in the City and elsewhere and set out the need for the consideration of habitats, climate and biodiversity goals in tree planting targets. The City Corporation's views on the role of wood pasture and slow-growing, long-lived landscape trees in sequestering carbon were raised by Baroness Walmsley.
15. The Team arranged an introductory meeting between City Police Authority Board Chairman James Thomson and City MP Nickie Aiken. Mrs Aiken expressed an interest in visiting the City Police when circumstances allow and has offered to help support the issues of concern to the force in Parliament.
16. The Office contacted a number of parliamentary stakeholders to promote the release of the first in a series of reports on the UK-US Regulatory Relationship. The report was well received by members of the British American Parliamentary Group and led to the proposal of the City Corporation supporting an APPG on Financial Markets and Services webinar on a US-UK Trade deal later in the year. A meeting has been arranged for March to discuss this proposal.
17. The Office collaborated with colleagues in IG to identify key parliamentary stakeholder as part of the promotion of the IRSG's recent report on FS priorities for the UK's G7 presidency this year.
18. The Team met with the secretariat of the China APPG to discuss priorities for the coming year.
19. The Office is in correspondence with the SNP Westminster office to organise a roundtable this month regarding civic leadership and green finance in the transition to net zero.

GLA and the Devolved Institutions (Objective 6)

20. The Office prepared a briefing for the Policy Chair ahead of her appearance before the London Assembly's EU Exit Working Group to discuss the City's reaction to the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement. The session discussed the scope of the TCA, what it meant for services, and the importance of the UK and EU forging a strong working relationship to address issues of shared concern in the future.
21. The Office joined a meeting between officers from the City Corporation's Climate Action Strategy programme and London Assembly Member Nicky Gavron (Lab) to discuss the scope of the programme with regard to planning,

open spaces and the build environment. The meeting followed on from the informal briefing session held with the Policy Chair and the London Assembly's Environment Committee on the Climate Action Strategy.

Key priorities over the next month

22. The Chancellor will deliver his Budget statement on 3 March and, working with Corporate Affairs, the Team will issue a Public Policy Bulletin to Members and Officers summarising the key announcements.
23. Submissions from the City Corporation will be drawn up for the Treasury Committee's inquiry into the future of financial services, the HCLG Committee's inquiry into planning, the Lords International Agreements Sub Committee's inquiry into UK Accession to the CPTPP and the EFRA Committee's inquiry into moving animals across borders.
24. Work will continue in support of the markets' relocation programme and the introduction of a private bill. Work on the Lords' Private Members Bill will re-engaged if the opportunity arises.
25. The Office will work to support the case for UK access to the Lugano Convention and other rule of law issues relevant to the City in liaison with the International Law Committee and the related professional bodies.
26. While social distancing guidelines remain in place, preventing face-to-face meetings, engagement with parliamentary stakeholders will remain predominantly online.

The Parliamentary Team
City Remembrancer's Office
11 February 2020

Appendix: Parliamentary Team Objectives

1. Propose amendments or new clauses to Brexit-related legislation to reflect Corporation views and report on the progress of such legislation to Members.
2. Draft and secure the passage through Parliament of Corporation legislation, with a particular focus on securing legislation on relocating the City's markets and gaining support for the provisions included in a Private Member's Bill on air quality.
3. Make submissions to Parliamentary committee inquiries into relevant Corporation issues in collaboration with the Economic Development Office (now Innovation and Growth) and other Departments.
4. Respond to any issues or concerns raised in Parliament in either debates or tabled questions through briefing relevant MPs and Peers.
5. Enhance Parliamentary engagement through direct contact with members of both Houses on key issues and with relevant All-Party Parliamentary Groups.
6. Enhance engagement with the Greater London Assembly and the devolved institutions on matters of interest to the City through briefings and submissions to relevant inquiries.