

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

Thursday, 14 February 2013

Minutes of the meeting of the Public Relations and Economic Development Sub-Committee held at the Guildhall EC2 at 10.45am

Present

Members:

Mark Boleat (Chairman)	Deputy Edward Lord
Stuart Fraser (Deputy Chairman)	Jeremy Mayhew
Roger Chadwick	Deputy Catherine McGuinness
Deputy Sir Michael Snyder	James Tumbridge
Deputy Douglas Barrow	Alderman Alan Yarrow

Officers:

John Barradell	- Town Clerk and Chief Executive
Tony Halmos	- Director of Public Relations
Giles French	- Assistant Director of Public Relations (Corporate Affairs)
Paul Sizeland	- Director of Economic Development
Liz Skelcher	- Economic Development Office
Simon Murrells	- Assistant Town Clerk
Angela Roach	- Town Clerk's Office

1. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Deputy Michael Cassidy.

2. DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS OF PERSONAL OR PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS IN RESPECT OF ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THIS MEETING

There were no declarations.

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Sub-Committee noted its terms of reference as follows:-

To consider and report to the Grand Committee on all matters relating to the City Corporation's Economic Development, public Relations, Public Affairs and Communication activities, including any related plans policies and strategies.

4. **WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE**

Members proceeded to consider the work of the Sub-Committee. During discussion the following points were made:-

- The Sub-Committee should seek power to act from the Grand Committee to enable it to deal with the arrangements for the annual party conferences;
- Reference was made to the activities undertaken to promote the City and it was suggested that, in order to ascertain how it could be enhanced a paper should be produced setting out current activities such as the work undertaken by Heart of the City and City Action. Members supported this and felt that, in addition, details of promotional work undertaken externally by City businesses should be submitted to a future meeting.
- Members noted the work being undertaken by the Davies Airport Commission and agreed that it was important to monitor and promote activities relating to air travel, particularly with regard to connectivity.
- Members noted that the issuing of business visitor visas was also very important issue which the City Corporation should continue to raise and apply pressure to where necessary. Reference was made to current research being undertaken on the issue and Officers undertook to circulate a copy of the paper "Open for Business". A Member stated that central Government needed to ensure that it differentiated between visitors and others as currently business visitors were being refused entry into the UK and as a consequence they were now holding business meetings in cities outside the UK. Members supported the production of a paper setting out the line to be taken generally on the current visa situation.
- It was suggested that the area of technology should also be considered by the Sub-Committee.

RESOLVED: That it be recommended to the Grand Committee that the Sub-Committee's terms of reference be amended to allow it to deal with the arrangements for the annual party conferences and that the following papers be prepared for consideration at future meetings of the Sub-Committee:-

1. in order to ascertain how promoting the City could be enhanced, a paper be produced setting out current activities undertaken by the City Corporation such as the Heart of the City and City Action activities;
2. the details of promotional work undertaken externally by City businesses; and
3. the production of a paper setting out the line to be taken on the current visa situation.

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

The Sub-Committee considered the appointment of a number of co-opted Members from the wider Court to serve on it.

Members noted the high number of expressions of interest received.

Reference was made to the recommendation from an informal meeting of the Sub-Committee that Alex Deane, Wendy Hyde and Ian Seaton be appointed to serve on the Sub-Committee. Reference was also made to the high level of talent available from amongst the Court and, as a consequence, it was proposed that the number of co-optees be increased from three to four Members. It was also suggested that, should the Grand Committee be minded to support the increase, Sophie Fernandes be appointed as the fourth co-optee. The Sub-Committee supported the suggestions.

RESOLVED – That:-

1. Alex Deane, Wendy Hyde and Ian Seaton be appointed to serve on the Sub-Committee as co-optees; and
2. the Grand Committee's approval be sought to increase the number of co-optees from the wider Court from three to four and that, should the request be supported, Sophie Fernandes be appointed as the fourth co-optee.

6. **CITY OF LONDON COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY - 2013 - 2016**

The Sub-Committee considered the draft City of London Communications Strategy for 2013 -2016.

During discussion the following matters were raised:-

- the merits of the production of an annual report in order to make relevant audiences more aware of the full range of the City Corporation's activities, particularly those who were decision makers;
- use of the website in communicating key messages;
- the forth-coming opinion polling of the City Corporation's target audiences which would result in more up to date information;
- Members questioned the priority order of the communication challenges and it was suggested that the sentence highlighting the order of priority should be removed and reference to the follow-up from the Common Council Elections moved further down the list; and
- a reference to responsible capitalism should be included in the key messages.

RESOLVED –That the Strategy be amended to take on board the above-mentioned comments where appropriate and that a revised version be submitted to the Grand Committee for approval.

7. **PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICE BUSINESS PLAN - 2013 - 2016**

The Sub-Committee considered the Public Relations Office Business Plan for 2013-16.

Reference was made to future horizon scanning and it was suggested that the issue of regulation should be included.

In response to a question on the inclusion of transaction tax, the Director of Economic Development advised that his office was working on research looking at the effects on the bond market. It was therefore suggested that the matter be referred to in the Economic Development Office's Business Plan.

RESOLVED – that the Public Relations Office Business Plan be amended to take on board the issue of regulation and that a revised version be submitted to the Grand Committee for approval.

8. **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICE BUSINESS PLAN - 2013-16**

The Sub-Committee considered the Economic Development Office Business Plan for 2013-16.

A Member referred to the strategic aims and commented that reference should be made to businesses generally and not just financial services. During further discussion the following suggestions were made:-

- the Plan should include activities being undertaken to attract businesses to London;
- the inclusion of the issues of Libor and extradition should be considered;
- thought should be given to the approach to be taken with regard to Corporation Tax and, due to the sensitivities surrounding the issue, the Chairman should be provided with a line to take on the matter.

RESOLVED – that the Economic Development Office Business Plan be amended to take on board the above mentioned suggestions, where appropriate, and that a revised version be submitted to the Grand Committee for approval.

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

A Member questioned whether reports from the Directors of Public Relations and Economic Development should be given prior consideration by the Sub-Committee. The Chairman pointed out that he was keen to avoid unnecessary bureaucracy and that future items should be treated on their merits. For example, the annual paper providing an overview of the work with think tanks should be seen by the Sub-Committee first but not items relating to individual policy proposals. Members supported his view.

10. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**
There were no items of urgent business for consideration.

The meeting closed at 11.50am

Chairman

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