

Committee(s)	Dated:
Public Relations/Economic Development Sub	19 February 2015
Subject: City of London Communications Strategy, 2015-18	Public
Report of: Director of Public Relations	For Decision

Each year, the *City of London Communications Strategy* is revised and updated, on a three-year rolling basis. Attached is a draft of the *Strategy* for 2015-18, on which comments are invited. The first page provides a full summary of the *Strategy* and the remainder of the document sets it out in detail.

Following any amendments, it will be submitted for approval to the Policy and Resources Committee in March and will then be published.

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**CITY OF LONDON
COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY
2015-18**



The City of London Corporation: helping London thrive

The Communications Strategy aims to promote and enhance **the work which the City of London Corporation undertakes to make London an excellent place to live, work and visit – helping London thrive.**



The *Strategy* broadens awareness of how the City Corporation **works for the Square Mile, London and the whole the UK** by:

- Supporting and promoting London as the world's leading international financial and business centre and attracting new business to the capital and the whole UK
- Working in partnership with local communities to increase skills, employment and opportunities for all Londoners, including through the City Bridge Trust
- Enhancing the capital as a hub of culture, history and green spaces for Londoners – residents, workers, and visitors.

The City Corporation **works for the Square Mile, London and the UK**, reaching audiences which are **local, regional, national** and **international**, targeting a wide range of opinion formers:

- City residents, workers, and visitors
- Business leaders and trade bodies
- Politicians and policymakers
- Journalists, bloggers and other commentators
- Third sector leaders and voluntary bodies



In order to **maintain the City Corporation's role as an essential voice in discussions about the future of London**, the *Strategy* seeks to:

- Engage with key audiences through digital and traditional media
- Explain in a transparent way the City Corporation's role, history, governance and finances
- Contribute to debates about London's competitiveness, including its governance, finances, infrastructure and services
- Build relationships with and facilitate engagement between a range of key stakeholders in London, the UK and abroad
- Disseminate the *Strategy's* objectives to City Corporation Members and officers via the internal communications plan in order better to 'embed' communications across the organisation.



The City of London Corporation: helping London thrive

The *Communications Strategy* aims to promote and enhance the work which the City of London Corporation undertakes to make London an excellent place to live, work and visit – **helping London thrive**.

The *Strategy* broadens awareness of how the City Corporation works for the Square Mile, London and the whole UK in three distinctive ways, distilled through a number of key messages.

Promoting and supporting London as the world's leading international financial and business centre and attracting new business to the capital and the whole UK

- The City Corporation supports and promotes London as the world's leading international financial and business centre;
- It argues the case that finance and business services are a key asset for the UK economy and need to remain globally competitive;
- It also highlights that London is not just the UK's financial centre, but the international financial and business centre for Europe and beyond, as well as an international centre for social investment;
- It also argues the case that, to remain globally competitive, London needs world class infrastructure, a workforce with the right skills, openness to talent from around the world, and a competitive regulatory and tax environment;
- The City Corporation plays a substantial role in Brussels, together with other industry bodies including *TheCityUK* and the *International Regulatory Strategy Group (IRSG)*, contributing to debates about EU financial services regulation and the UK's role in the EU; and
- The City Corporation provides first class local services for the Square Mile, especially in a period of tightly constrained budgets, and supports the work of the City of London Police in tackling economic crime across the country and helping keep the City safe and secure.

Working in partnership with local communities to increase skills and opportunities for all Londoners, including through the City Bridge Trust

- The City Corporation works to raise aspirations among young people and contribute to better achievement in schools, through sponsorship of academy schools in neighbouring boroughs and other projects;
- It promotes employability, skills, apprenticeships and job brokerage;
- It supports entrepreneurship, small and medium sized enterprises, and social enterprises and promotes Central London Forward as part of London's *Growth Deal* and the wider devolution agenda;
- It promotes the Lord Mayor's civic role and the work of the Livery;
- It supports efforts to improve London's air quality and works on other public health issues across the capital; and
- It promotes the work of the City Corporation's charity, the City Bridge Trust, in supporting the charitable and voluntary sector across the whole of London.

Enhancing the capital as a hub of culture, history and green spaces for Londoners – residents, workers and visitors.

- The City Corporation plays a full part in contributing to London's culture, heritage and green spaces;
- It supports London's cultural life, through the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, the Guildhall Art Gallery, the Barbican Centre, funding for the London Symphony Orchestra and more;
- It helps to look after the nation's history and heritage, through the London Metropolitan Archives, the Guildhall Library, the Monument, Gresham College and other facilities;
- It funds jointly the Museum of London with the GLA;
- It provides 11,000 acres of green spaces in and around London, including Hampstead Heath and Epping Forest; and
- It manages the green spaces within the Square Mile to enhance the local environment for residents, workers, and visitors.

Delivery of Messages

In order to **maintain the City Corporation's role as an essential voice in discussions about the future of London**, the *Strategy* seeks to:

- Engage with key audiences through digital and traditional media;
- Explain in a transparent way the City Corporation's role, history, governance and finances;
- Contribute to debates about London's competitiveness, including its governance, finances, infrastructure and services;
- Build relationships with and facilitate engagement between a range of key stakeholders in London, the UK and abroad; and
- Disseminate the *Strategy's* objectives to City Corporation Members and officers via the internal communications plan in order better to 'embed' communications across the organisation.

Key messages are delivered to the relevant audiences using the most appropriate channels. These include particularly individual contacts, events (including conferences, seminars and informal discussion meetings), printed and online published materials, and working with the media.

To ensure that the communications of the City Corporation are received in a consistent and timely manner, it is also crucial that senior Members and Officers are fully informed and able to play appropriate roles in this work.



Role of the Lord Mayor and Policy Chairman in delivering messages

One of the crucial tasks of the *Communications Strategy* will be the continuing need to maintain at a high level the standing of the Mayoralty. In line with the strategy on this matter for a number of years, the best way to achieve this will continue to be the reinforcement of the major role which the

Lord Mayor plays as the City's ambassador, in representing the interests of modern finance and business and communicating with a wide variety of audiences and stakeholders, overseas and in the UK.

In addition, it will continue to be an important component of this *Strategy* to explain the distinction between the respective roles of the Lord Mayor and the Mayor of London.

Successful promotion of the City is dependent on an effective partnership between the Lord Mayor and the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee and the supporting officers at the Mansion House and Guildhall. This *Communications Strategy* takes full account of this requirement. It is also

assisted in its implementation by regular liaison meetings between the Lord Mayor and the Chairman of Policy and Resources, which ensure a co-ordinated approach to this work.

Audiences

The City Corporation **works for the Square Mile, London and the whole UK**, reaching audiences which are **local, regional, national and international**, targeting a wide range of opinion formers, including:



- City residents, workers, and visitors
- Business leaders and trade bodies
- Politicians and policymakers
- Journalists, bloggers and other commentators
- Third sector leaders and voluntary bodies.

The full range of the key audiences and the relevant activities directed towards them is as follows:

Audience	Activity
Residents	Extended efforts are undertaken to communicate systematically with residents through specially targeted publications and other communications, and the holding of annual residents’ meetings.
City workers	City workers influence others with whom they work and come into contact – on City issues generally, and on our role and work to the extent that they are informed. They also, crucially, the audience from which is drawn the City voters appointed by businesses. They are also themselves direct users of our local services, especially policing and libraries, as well as gaining from our care and maintenance of the City’s streets and general environment. The level of knowledge of our work among the broad range of City workers should be increased over time by carefully targeted communications. In particular, the opportunities provided by social media need further to be developed and used.

Visitors	Suitable communications with visitors to the City are increasingly important, as they help bring employment opportunities and growth to the Square Mile.
Businesses	Regular contact with both senior business figures and a wide range of City businesses as well as City institutions, trade associations etc. This also includes other relevant business sectors such as property and utilities.
Politicians and relevant public bodies	Regular contact with the main political audiences at all levels: Westminster and Whitehall, local government across Greater London, Scotland and the other devolved governments within the UK, as well as EU political contacts including MEPs.
Media	The media, both in their own right as opinion formers and as a mechanism to reach the other audiences, must always be of the highest priority. In the current economic climate, there is a greater interest than normal in the activities of the financial services industry and the City and thus, responding to this, the media is giving more extensive coverage to these issues. Also, the media is evolving rapidly, with the growth of social media and other digital channels and resources need to be devoted to keeping abreast of this, including video images and other suitable new content.
Londoners	Many residents, workers, businesses, and visitors across London make use of the services which the City Corporation provides Greater London as a whole, not just within the Square Mile. They represent an important audience which needs to be targeted effectively on a continuing basis.
Relevant international audiences	Engagement with policy makers, regulators, businesses and central banks in Europe and the USA, is undertaken in order to influence debate and policy. Similar audiences in key growth markets, including China and India, are targeted with our messages on London as the world's leader in international finance and business services.

Third sector leaders and voluntary bodies

Engagement with the third sector and voluntary bodies, especially in relation to the role of the City Corporation's charity, the City Bridge Trust, and other parts of the organisation making financial and other contributions to the work in the sector.

The Livery

The Livery is kept briefed on our role and work, and is supported in the promotion of its role. Briefings for new Livery members are conducted at Guildhall. We also consult the Livery on issues of concern to them, through the Livery Committee and its relevant sub-Committees, as well as other ad-hoc arrangements, including material relating to the Livery on the website.

Elected Members

It is essential that Members are kept up to date on key issues and messages, to enable them to be effective communicators on behalf of the organisation. This is achieved through regular communications, such as the Members' Briefing, and also via electronic alerts as appropriate.

City Corporation Employees

Internal communications also form a crucial part of the overall *Communications Strategy*. Keeping employees informed and engaged, is essential in helping them to remain engaged, committed, well-motivated, and to be good ambassadors for the organisation with external audiences. This is supported by the Internal Communications Plan.

Communications Challenges and Opportunities in 2015/16

- Supporting the work to maintain the City's international competitiveness, including the relevant role of the EU Single Market;
- Promoting and developing the City's role not just in the London economy but also in the UK and EU economy, mindful in particular in the current year of possible implications of the General Election in May 2015;
- Continuing to highlight the important role played by the creative industries in Tech City and beyond in the UK economy;

- Promoting the City Corporation’s work in partnership with London’s communities, specifically on education and employability, mindful in particular of the Mayoral and London Assembly elections in May 2016;
- Promoting the City Corporation’s role in contributing to London’s culture, history and green spaces, including the Magna Carta 800th Anniversary in 2015, the planning for the 350th anniversary of the Great Fire in September 2016, and the continuing ponds project at Hampstead Heath;
- Promoting London as a global centre for social investment and philanthropy through better business practices;
- Preparing for the General Election in 2015, and the London Mayor and Assembly elections in 2016;
- Encouraging the appointment of voters by City businesses in the run-up to elections for the Court of Common Council in 2017;
- Continuing to monitor, engage with and expand the use of social media and other digital communications, including the website;
- Ensuring good and improving internal communications with Members and employees;
- Furthering the City Corporation’s transparency agenda;
- Supporting the work of the City of London Police as the lead force in the UK for combatting economic crime, including cyber-enabled crime;
- Handling communications issues, both external and internal, around the service-based review of the City Corporation’s income and expenditure budgets;
- Handling any street works, highway management, and road safety issues; and
- Promoting the City Corporation’s responsibility for public health and support for the London-wide work on air quality.

Horizon-scanning for challenges and opportunities in 2016/17 and 2017/18

2016/17 Run-up to possible referendum on British membership of the EU
 London Mayoral and Assembly Elections, *5 May 2016*
 400th Anniversary of the death of William Shakespeare, *23 April 2016*
 Centenary of the First World War – Battle of the Somme, *1 July 2016*
 350th Anniversary of the Great Fire of London, *2 September 2016*
 US Presidential and Congressional elections, *3 November 2016*

2017/18 Possible referendum on British membership of the EU
 French Presidential and National Assembly elections, *May and June 2017*
 German Bundestag elections, *September 2017*

Implementation of the Communications Strategy

2015

The Public Relations Office leads on the delivery of the *Communications Strategy 2015-18*, but also coordinates with departments across the organisation. Through the implementation of the *Communications Strategy*, communications are embedded across the organisation to ensure consistent and coordinated messages are delivered.

This process of ‘embedding’ involves ensuring that there are ample opportunities across the organisation better to understand its different functions and, in so doing, enhance the knowledge base among both Members and officers of the key components of the *Communications Strategy*. The objective, in short, is to empower more local communications, while maintaining high standards across the organisation; this includes reinforcing the importance of communications as an integral part of departmental business plans, especially with regard to the use of digital communications and the social media implications of reputational risk. It is also important for senior Members and officers to take opportunities to promote our key messages in relevant forums. To this end and where appropriate, individual departments will be asked to prepare their own specific PR plans.

One of the key roles of the *Communications Strategy* is also to embed across the organisation the importance of managing reputational risk. Across the organisation, there is a continually growing awareness of the emerging role of social media, specifically in relation to the management of reputational risk and we have developed a strategy for this, including relevant training of an ever-wider group of City Corporation staff and more detailed and systematic monitoring of relevant activity in the social media sphere.

Discussions of this crucial work are now planned on a regular basis, with periodic reviews to be held at Chief Officers’ meetings of the progress being made overall, as well as individual meetings with departments about their particular areas of responsibility.

2018