

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Policy and Resources	28 May 2015
<b>Subject:</b> Support for a Study to Strengthen the City's Role in working with London's Communities	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Director of Economic Development	<b>For Decision</b>

### Summary

The City Corporation has an extensive programme of work aimed at supporting Londoners into employment, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds. A number of City businesses, particularly larger ones, civic organisations (including some Livery Companies and trade bodies) are also active in this area.

However, there is scope to do more, learn from 'what works' to improve the effectiveness of the City's collective efforts, and ensure work in this area is complementary and coordinated to reduce duplication and overlap.

Therefore, a Study is proposed to: look at the challenges facing unemployed young Londoners; identify examples of good practice; consider what could be done differently to help address the problem; and suggest some principles to guide further work in this area. The Study would be driven by a Panel of members drawn from the Livery, City businesses, stakeholders (Boroughs and organisations working on these issues) and the City Corporation. It would culminate in the publication and dissemination of a short report.

This report proposes that your Committee approves funding of up to £30,000 for 2015/16 to fund research and related activity to enable the Study to be undertaken.

The proposed Study complements the City Corporation's wider activities to support London's communities and could bring positive reputational benefits to the City Corporation.

### Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- Approve funding of £30,000 to fund research and related activity including dissemination and an event, for a study to Strengthen the City's role in working with London's Communities to be met from your Committee's Policy Initiatives Fund for 2015/16 under the Communities heading, and charged to City's Cash.

- Delegate authority to appoint members of the Study Panel to the Town Clerk in consultation with your Chairman and the Study Panel's two proposed Co-Chairs.

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. The City Corporation has an extensive programme of work aimed at improving the employment opportunities for the people of London, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Whilst much of London has benefitted from job creation in recent years, there remain significant challenges to securing employment for many of London's communities. The overall unemployment rate for London (8.2%) is still above the England average (7.1%) and 121,000 young people in London are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).
2. Numerous City businesses and civic organisations (including Livery Companies and trade bodies) are also active in this agenda, with many undertaking their activity with little or no involvement from the City Corporation. This work includes:
  - Assisting companies to develop community programmes, e.g. through Heart of the City, City Action etc.
  - Outreach work by City Corporation services, e.g. Barbican/GSMD, Open Spaces, Museum of London etc.
  - Direct support for employment programmes
  - Support for local recruitment and apprenticeships
  - The grants programme through City Bridge Trust
  - Support for education and employability in schools
  - Promoting best practice through research and the City's convening powers
3. However, despite there being a wealth of activity underway, there is scope to do more and to improve the activity already underway to help young people into employment. In addition, there is potential for some of this activity to duplicate or overlap and there currently appear to be limited opportunities to learn from good practice and experience.

### **Proposal**

4. To help ensure that efforts in this area are being directed to best effect, it is proposed that the City Corporation initiate a small study to:
  - Draw together evidence to identify and explore barriers faced by young people from disadvantaged groups in accessing employment;
  - Identify exemplars of good practice undertaken in this area; and
  - Make suggestions for how the effectiveness of work in this area can be improved.

5. The focus of the study will be employability (the skills and connections needed to access employment) for young Londoners (up to the age of 25) and will look at the core questions of:
  - What is the problem and current situation?
  - How far does current activity address the problem?
  - How do we move forward?
6. The study will be driven by a panel of individuals representing civic organisations (e.g. Livery Companies and trade bodies), City Businesses and stakeholders (Local Authorities and practitioners).
7. The expected outcome of the study will be a short publication that summarises the problem and challenges, highlights examples of good practice that are relevant to the City and provides some 'principles' to guide further work in this area. An event will be held to conclude the study and to disseminate its findings. The intended audience for the study is City Corporation elected Members, City businesses and other civic organisations.
8. To ensure that the Study is beneficial, it will be necessary to maintain a clear focus on its core questions. The Study will not explore issues relating to the education system (although it may consider how far schools prepare young people for the world of work) nor seek to create a political lobbying tool. The Study will rather be a way to draw attention to the problem of youth unemployment in London and raise awareness of the good work already underway to tackle the problem and suggest areas where more could be done.

## **Membership**

9. The proposed membership of the Study Panel is:
  - 2 co-chairs:
    - i. Alderman Charles Bowman
    - ii. Debby Ounsted CBE (Master Mercer)
  - 3 Court Members, one of which to be drawn from the membership of the Education Board.
  - 3 senior representatives from City businesses
  - 3 representatives from projects/ organisations supporting young people into employment
  - 2 Leaders of London Local Authorities
  - Observers (acting in an advisory capacity only): e.g. Livery Companies Skills Council / Livery Schools Link.
10. It is proposed responsibility for appointing members to the Study Panel be delegated to the Town Clerk to work in consultation with your Chairman and the Study Panel's two proposed Co-Chairs. Members would be expected to represent their area of expertise, provide input and be responsible for disseminating the product amongst their constituents and championing this issue.

## Process and timescales

11. It is proposed that the Panel meets twice. Preliminary work will be undertaken prior to the first meeting to prepare a framework of questions and evidence for the members to consider at their first meeting. A small research element will be undertaken to draw together information on the issue and challenges as well as identify examples of good practice.
12. The second meeting of the Panel will focus on agreeing key messages and how to disseminate messages and findings. It is anticipated that the Study will take six-months to complete its task.

## Resources

13. The Economic Development Office estimates that it has the capacity to provide the required Officer support to oversee a study of the size outlined above. In addition, the study would require £25,000-£30,000 broken down as follows:
  - Research paper - £10,000
  - Design and print - £5,000 - £10,000 (will depend on specification of final product)
  - Events - £5,000
  - Policy support - £5,000 (possible secondment of officer from a research organisation to support the panel and possible dissemination activities)

## Corporate & Strategic Implications

14. The proposed creation of the Study and Panel supports Key Policy Priority 4 of the Corporate Plan (*Maximising the opportunities and benefits afforded by our role in supporting London's communities*). It also contributes to delivery of objective 4 of the Economic Development Office Business Plan 2015-2018: *Working with businesses and CoLC departments (including City Bridge Trust), to understand and realise the economic and social potential of London, but especially the City and the neighbouring boroughs.*

## Implications

15. It is proposed that the cost of the Study of up to £30,000 be drawn from your Committee's Policy Initiatives Fund for 2015/16, categorised under 'Communities' and charged to City's Cash.
16. The current uncommitted balance available within the Fund amounts to some £259,300 for 2015/16, prior to any allowance being made for any other proposals on today's agenda.

## Conclusion

17. Support for the proposed Study would complement the City Corporation's wider support for employment and employability and would underline the organisation's commitment to the jobs and growth agenda in London.

**Appendices**

None

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