

| | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Committee: Policy and Resources | Date: 24 September 2015 |
| Subject: City of London Corporation Think Tank Subscriptions, 2015-16 | Public |
| Report of: Director of Public Relations | For Decision |

Summary

Corporate membership of think tanks forms an integral part of the City Corporation's *Communications Strategy 2015-18* and wider economic development priorities. In 2014-15 the City Corporation was a corporate member of ten think tanks - CentreForum, the Centre for the Study of Financial Innovation (CSFI), Chatham House, Demos, the European Policy Forum (EPF), the Foreign Policy Centre (FPC), the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR), the Local Government Information Unit (LGIU), the New Local Government Network (NLGN) and Reform.

Following a review, it is proposed that the City Corporation cease to be member of CentreForum and Demos but continue membership of the other eight think tanks. In addition, the membership fee for the New Local Government Network has been negotiated down from £15,000 to £12,000. This will have the effect of reducing the total cost of think tank memberships from £95,000 in the previous year to £77,000 in 2015/16.

Recommendation

This report recommends renewal of the City of London Corporation's corporate membership of the eight think tanks listed in this report at a total cost of £77,000 to be met from your Committee's Policy Initiatives Fund 2015/16, categorised under the Events section of the Fund and charged to *City's Cash*.

Main Report

Background

1. The City of London Corporation's activities with a range of think tanks from across the mainstream political spectrum is an integral part of the City of London *Communications Strategy 2015-18* and wider economic development priorities. The think tanks' close relationship with and

intrinsic knowledge of the political world allows the City Corporation to engage with senior policymakers on relevant issues, through a variety of means, including public conferences, set-piece speeches and seminars, topical research projects and occasional private dinners. All necessary efforts are made by officers to ensure that this programme of work is appropriately politically balanced.

Proposal

2. A number of think tanks offer corporate membership schemes. As well as providing a means for the City Corporation to strengthen its relationship with the respective think tank, corporate membership schemes carry a number of benefits, including invitations for Members and officers to attend events, copies of all publications and receipt of policy briefings. Corporate members are also in regular contact with senior staff at the think tanks to discuss the progress of relevant projects, thereby enabling them to be on the 'inside track' of the development of public policy.
3. In 2014-15, the City Corporation was a member of ten think tanks: CentreForum, the Centre for the Study of Financial Innovation (CSFI), Chatham House, Demos, the European Policy Forum (EPF), the Foreign Policy Centre (FPC), the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR), the Local Government Information Unit (LGIU), the New Local Government Network (NLGN) and Reform.
4. After a review considering the value for money of the memberships, it is proposed that the City Corporation cease membership of CentreForum and Demos (N.B. It is planned to continue working with these two think tanks in other ways, but cease the annual membership and subscription). In addition, the membership fee for the New Local Government Network has been negotiated down from £15,000 to £12,000. It is proposed to continue membership of the remaining eight think tanks that are listed in the annexe. This will have the effect of reducing the total cost of think tank memberships from £95,000 in the previous year to £77,000 in 2015/16.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

5. It is proposed that the required funding of £77,000 is drawn from your Policy Initiatives Fund 2015/16 and categorised under the Events section of the Fund and charged to *City's Cash*. The current uncommitted balance available within your Committee's Policy Initiatives Fund 2015/16

amounts to £389,300 prior to any allowance being made for any other proposals on today's agenda.

Conclusion

6. Corporate membership schemes provide a means for the City Corporation to strengthen its relationship with respective think tanks, as well as a range of additional benefits for Members and officers. These memberships form an integral part of the City Corporation's *Communications Strategy 2015-18* and wider economic development priorities.

Tony Halmos

Director of Public Relations

T: 020 7332 1450

E: tony.halmos@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Annexe

| Renewal of City of London Corporation Think Tank Subscriptions 2015-16 | | |
|--|---|-----------------------|
| Think tank | Recent activities with CoL | Membership fee |
| <p>Centre for the Study of Financial Innovation (CSFI)</p> <p>A not-for-profit think tank, based in the City of London, which provides a forum for well-informed debate and research about the future of the financial services sector.</p> | <p>The City Corporation has been a Corporate sponsor since the 1990s and has worked with CSFI on an academic expert directory and a high level roundtable on HM Government's Balance of Competences Review.</p> | <p>£5,000</p> |
| <p>Chatham House</p> <p>Home of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, Chatham House is an independent international policy institute based in London.</p> | <p>The City Corporation has been a Corporate sponsor since 2009 and has worked with Chatham House on a major conference on financial regulation and a dinner with the UK's Permanent Representative. The City Corporation is planning to work with Chatham House on a conference on infrastructure finance.</p> | <p>£12,500</p> |
| <p>European Policy Forum (EPF)</p> <p>Aims to improve the quality of policy ideas for the UK and the EU. Competition and choice and their interaction with other public policy objectives and the public interest overall, are at the centre of its work.</p> | <p>The City Corporation has been a Corporate Sponsor since 2006 and has worked with the EPF on a seminar on taxation, a roundtable with the Governor of the Bank of Finland and a major event on infrastructure. The City Corporation is working with EPF on a dinner with Sergio Ermotti of UBS.</p> | <p>£7,500</p> |

| | | |
|--|---|----------------|
| <p>Foreign Policy Centre (FPC) A UK-based independent progressive foreign affairs think tank.</p> | <p>The City Corporation has been a Corporate sponsor since 2006 and has worked with the FPC on a conference on mobile banking and dinners with the Business Secretary, Shadow Foreign Secretary and Shadow Chancellor. The City Corporation is working with FPC on a dinner with Transport Secretary Patrick McLoughlin.</p> | <p>£10,000</p> |
| <p>Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) A progressive think-tank, whose aim is to produce rigorous research and innovative policy ideas for a fair, democratic and sustainable world.</p> | <p>The City Corporation has been a Corporate Sponsor since 2008 and has worked with IPPR on major research projects on globalisation and emissions trading plus a major conference on industrial policy featuring the Business Secretary, a roundtable discussion on youth unemployment with the Shadow Employment Minister and an events series on emerging markets.</p> | <p>£12,500</p> |
| <p>Local Government Information Unit (LGIU) LGIU is a think tank and local authority membership organisation that aims to strengthen local democracy by putting citizens in control of their own lives, communities and local services.</p> | <p>Membership of LGIU entitles a range of City Corporation Members and Officers to receive a regular series of news updates, briefings and reports.</p> | <p>£10,000</p> |

| | | |
|--|--|----------------|
| <p>New Local Government Network (NLGN)</p> <p>An independent think tank and network of local authorities committed to promoting the decentralisation of power, public service reform, and enhancing local governance.</p> | <p>The City Corporation has been a Corporate Sponsor since 2003 and has worked with NLGN on major conferences on capital finance and local growth plus research projects on capital finance. Guildhall hosted the 2015 NLGN annual Conference.</p> | <p>£12,000</p> |
| <p>Reform</p> <p>A centre-right think tank promoting new directions for public policy based on the principles of free enterprise, limited government, and individual liberty.</p> | <p>The City Corporation has been a Corporate Sponsor since 2008 and has worked with Reform on a series of events including dinners with the Minister for the Civil Society, the Culture Secretary and the Leader of the House of Lords. The City Corporation is working with Reform on a dinner with Skills Minister Nick Boles.</p> | <p>£7,500</p> |