

Committee: Policy and Resources Committee	Date: 19 October 2015
Subject: Review of Business Plan 2015/18	Public
Report of: City Remembrancer	For Information

Summary

This report provides Members with an overview of the activities of the Remembrancer's Office for the period 1 April to 30 September 2015.

Significant progress has been made against the objectives included in the latest business plan and highlights are provided in this report. An update of the Office's local risk position for the six month period ending 30 September is also included.

Recommendation

Members are invited to receive this report.

Main Report

Background

1. The Remembrancer's Office Business Plan for 2015/18 was approved by this Committee on 28 May 2015. The plan sets out the strategic direction of the Office and demonstrates how the work of the Office supports the policy priorities described in the corporate plan. This report provides an update on performance in the six month period leading up to 30 September 2015.

Parliamentary

2. With the General Election falling at the beginning of the reporting period, the Parliamentary team has been busy analysing the Government's legislative programme and building its knowledge of the new MPs, and new appointments to the Government and Shadow Front Benches. Working with the corporate affairs branch of the Public Relations Office, the team facilitated the annual reception on the Parliamentary Terrace in June, shortly after the new Parliament commenced and MPs started work, providing an opportunity for Members, Officers and City practitioners to meet the new intake.
3. The Office has been engaged in drafting a private Bill to amend the legislation governing the City Corporation's Open Spaces. This will be deposited in the Autumn, if the Court of Common Council gives its approval. This has necessitated close working with the Open Spaces Department, consideration

by the Management Committees and Consultative Committees, and consultation with local bodies interested in specific Open Spaces.

4. The Remembrancer's Office's other legislative activity over the previous six months has included:
 - a. Providing analysis and reports on the Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill, working closely with Central London Forward and London Councils to identify how the City and the Boroughs could benefit from the Bill;
 - b. Examining the provisions of the EU Referendum Bill, in particular the scope of the restrictions on campaigning and voting qualifications;
 - c. Assessing the effects of the Psychoactive Substances Bill on the Corporation's trading standards powers and on the Police and reporting to committees;
 - d. Examination and reporting of the Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Bill as it relates to the City's social investment activities and City Bridge Trust;
 - e. Reporting on the Welfare Reform and Work Bill and its consequences for the City Corporation;
 - f. Reporting on the new duties placed on the City Corporation's educational institutions by the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015;
 - g. Monitoring the progress of and reporting on the Education and Adoption Bill;
 - h. Monitoring the progress of proposed new secondary legislation to grant permanent planning rights to convert offices into homes, and advising the Department of Built Environment on the City Corporation's approach.
5. Evidence has been prepared for the following inquiries:
 - a. House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee's inquiries into psychoactive substances and into immigration and skills shortages;
 - b. House of Lords inquiry into national policy on the built environment;
 - c. Business Innovation and Skills Committee inquiry into productivity;
 - d. Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee inquiry into connectivity.
6. In liaison with Mansion House, the Economic Development Office and other Corporation Departments, the Office has maintained an active programme of engagement with MPs and peers through briefings on matters of interest to the City, including air quality, trade and investment, broadband connectivity, immigration and the creative industries.
7. A number of themes have already emerged in this Session which are likely to remain high on the agenda for the remainder of the Parliament. Key among these is the continuing debate over whether the UK remains in the EU. Other areas include devolution, housing (especially in London), planning and productivity. Aviation is also likely to be a key policy issue in this session, and in the run up to next year's Mayoral elections, once the Government responds formally to the conclusions of the Airports Commission.

8. The Office continues to maintain its dialogue with officers at City Hall. Since April 2015 the Office has responded to committee inquiries on preventing extremism in London and the role of the third sector in employment and skills programs.
9. Team members work with officers from across the Corporation including in particular over the past six months, Departments of the Built Environment, City Surveyor, Open Spaces and Town Clerk's and the Police. Team members have regular and detailed interaction with officers from Public Relations Office, Economic Development Office, and the Comptroller and City Solicitor.
10. A member of the Office has attended the three main Party Conferences to monitor proceedings on the Conference fringe and identify policy developments. Full reports on each conference have, as usual, been circulated with the Parliamentary Brief.

City Events

11. The Office has organised in the past six months a number of events to mark occasions of national importance, including receptions following Services at St Paul's Cathedral commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain and the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo, and an early evening reception following a lecture to mark the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II. The City also provided hospitality to survivors and relatives attending Remembrance Services across London on the 10th anniversary of the 2005 London Bombings.
12. The City Corporation partnered the second Conference on Inclusive Capitalism which took place at Mansion House followed by a reception at Guildhall. The event attracted world business leaders and included a closing address by former US President Bill Clinton. The City Corporation continues to support the Commonwealth, hosting the 17th Commonwealth Lecture on Youth, Innovation and Sustainable Development and a dinner to mark the 600th anniversary of the Association of Commonwealth Serjeants at Arms.
13. The Office delivered a varied programme of hospitality in support of the Corporation's cultural strategy, including a City of London Festival musical performance; the second public performance in Guildhall Yard by the City's two Reserve Forces orchestras from the Honourable Artillery Company and the Royal Yeomanry; a reception to mark the Guildhall and City Business Libraries' Philately Exhibition; and an early evening reception marking the 150th anniversary of the Royal College of Organists following a recital in St Lawrence Jewry Church.
14. The City once again marked its support for HM Armed Forces by staging a flag-raising ceremony in Guildhall Yard on Armed Forces Day.
15. The Corporate Events Management Group continues to meeting regularly as part of the "joining up" initiative to increase cross-departmental co-ordination. It has considered and commented on the developing proposals emerging from

the 'effectiveness of hospitality' service based review. The group includes representatives from EDO, PRO, Remembrancer's, Barbican Centre, Mansion House, Museum of London and Culture, Heritage and Libraries.

16. In addition to the City's hospitality programme, the Office has organised 14 Committee events during the six months ending 30 September including this Committee's dinner at which two EU Commissioners spoke. Other Committee events have included dinners for the City Bridge Trust and the Health & Wellbeing Board, visits to Open Spaces' Burnham Beeches and West Ham Park and Port Health and Environmental Services' annual inspection of the Port.

Private events

17. The number of private events for the six month period ending 30 September 2015 of approximately 190 is at a similar level to last year but income has increased by £148,000 when compared to the same period last year. This is in line with the drive to attract events charged at the commercial rate.
18. Further initiatives to promote Guildhall and increase income include;
 - attracting new clients – the departmental performance indicator to identify ten new clients each year has been achieved in the first six months. New clients have included Championships Wimbledon, the International Association of Young Lawyers and the Advertising Producers Association;
 - updating our literature in relation to use of Guildhall for private lettings. The Guildhall brochure is being revamped and the website updated. The team are also looking to increase use of social media;
 - production of a joint brochure with the Barbican Centre;
 - liaising with other venues to identify areas of best practice; and
 - an improved procedure for obtaining customer feedback to identify areas of good practice and those for improvement.
19. As well as attracting new business, the Guildhall continues to accommodate many returning clients. These include the British Food and Beverage Industry, Clearview, London Platinum and Palladium Market, London School of Economics, PiXL (Partners in Excellence) Club and the Embassy of Israel.
20. The City Venues Group continues to help share best practice across City venues. Where possible, event enquiries are referred between City venues so as to keep business within City owned venues. Systems have been put in place to enable referrals between the venues to maximise the opportunities to offer accommodation.

Resources

21. Indications are that the Office's local risk budget position will remain within its local risk resources for this financial year. Following the Corporate Service Based Reviews and as agreed by this Committee in September 2014, the Office has made £50,000 savings from the Corporate Hospitality budget,

effective from this financial year, and income will as agreed increase by £50,000 in the estimates next year.

22. Proposals arising from the 'effectiveness of hospitality' review will be submitted to this Committee later this year, having first been considered by the Hospitality Working Party.
23. The Office has engaged with the cross-cutting review on income generation and has put forward suggestions to increase income for the City. Based on current bookings of Guildhall to the end of 2015/16, the estimated income of £1.4m has been exceeded by approximately £150,000 compared to the same period last year. As part of the initiative to generate additional income, a full review of the charging structure for Guildhall lettings will take place later this year and will be reported to this Committee by March 2016.
24. The Office has also commented on the tender for the new cleaning contract at Guildhall. To ensure we are able to provide a first class service and facilities to clients hiring Guildhall, the Office has requested a number of improvements to cleaning within and around the lettable areas.
25. A number of staffing changes have taken place and recruitment exercises undertaken.

Learning and development six-monthly review

26. A departmental workforce plan has been produced which will identify potential issues regarding staffing, resources and skills. A departmental workforce group has been created to discuss matters in relation to the workforce.
27. Training has been undertaken by a number of staff. This has included training to use the upgraded Artifax diary system and induction training for new members of staff.
28. The Office has provided information for the corporate reaccreditation of the Investors in People (IIP) Standard. Three staff from the Remembrancer's Office were selected and interviewed by the IIP Assessors at the second stage of the process in September and feedback is awaited.

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