

<b>Committee:</b> Public Relations/Economic Development Sub (Policy and Resources) Committee	<b>Dated:</b> 18 February 2016
<b>Subject:</b> City of London Corporation 2016 Party Conference Activity	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Director of Economic Development	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>Report Author:</b> Eugenie de Naurois, Economic Development Office	

### Summary

This report sets out the background to the City of London Corporation's activity at the annual political party conferences and gives a summary of the proposed format of activities in 2016 for the Liberal Democrat Party Conference in Brighton, the Labour Party Conference in Liverpool and the Conservative Party Conference in Birmingham. Private dinners will be organised solely by the City Corporation. Other supporting events may be organised with partner organisations.

### Main Report

#### Background

1. The City of London Corporation began attending the major party conferences in 1994, initially with small, private dinners and then also with fringe meetings from 1997. This formula has continued over recent years with an open public fringe meeting on the Monday evening followed by a private dinner, which is attended by representatives of the Policy and Resources Committee and relevant Officers.
2. The party conferences are a particularly useful part of the City Corporation's political contact programme as the majority of its key contacts are found in the same place at the same time. The conferences also allow the City Corporation to maintain its presence in a number of strategically significant policy debates.

#### Current Position and Proposal

##### 2016 Conferences

3. This year's Party Conferences run across three weeks, from the end of September through to the beginning of October.
  - a. The Liberal Democrat Party Conference is taking place in Brighton, 17-20 September
  - b. The Labour Party Conference is taking place in Liverpool, 25-28 September

- c. The Conservative Party Conference is taking place in Birmingham, 2-5 October
4. We propose to change the traditional format adopted in previous years for supporting events. Given the unreliable turnout to fringe meetings, and their associated high costs, it is sensible to give serious consideration to organising smaller invitation-only roundtable events. The events would have a principle speaker and be chaired by the Policy Chairman. We would invite guests relevant to the policy issue. We would propose organising the events in partnership with a relevant think tank.
5. An alternative option would be to organise an open fringe event, as in previous years. If we continue with this format, it is recommended to only do so at the Conservative Party Conference, as this is the one with the highest turnout.
6. We propose to continue to host a private dinner at all three Party Conferences, as in previous years.

### **Recommendation**

Members are recommended to agree on one of the two options for the supporting events' format:

- i. Option 1: to organise invitation-only roundtable events at all three Party Conferences
- ii. Option 2: to organise an open public supporting event at the Conservative Party Conference only, and invitation-only roundtable events at the Liberal Democrat and Labour Party conferences.

### **Conclusion**

Members are asked to agree on the new format of supporting events for the 2016 party conferences.

### **Contact:**

*Eugénie de Naurois*

*Head of Corporate Affairs*

020 7332 1942

[eugenie.denaurois@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:eugenie.denaurois@cityoflondon.gov.uk)