

Committee: Policy and Resources Committee	Date: 6 October 2016
Subject: Review of Business Plan 2016/19	Public
Report of: City Remembrancer	For Information
Report Author: Margaret Pooley	

Summary

This report provides Members with an overview of the key activities of the Remembrancer's Office for the period 1 April to 30 September 2016.

Recommendation

Members are invited to receive this report.

Main Report

Background

1. The Remembrancer's Office Business Plan for 2016/19 was approved by this Committee on 19 May. 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.

Parliamentary

2. The EU Referendum and its outcome (including the formation of a new Government) has dominated proceedings in Westminster. Following the announcement of the date of the Referendum, and throughout the Referendum period, the Parliamentary team, working with other departments, provided analysis to Members and officers. It also advised on the application of the EU Referendum Act to the City Corporation's activities.
3. In relation to legislation, the Remembrancer's Office over the last six months has reported on the Investigatory Powers Bill, the Policing and Crime Bill, the Higher Education and Research Bill, the Housing and Planning Act and the Enterprise Act.
4. Evidence has been submitted to the following inquiries:
 - a. Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee inquiry into "Countries of Culture";
 - b. Business, Innovation and Skills Committee inquiry into business views on the EU Referendum;

- c. Communities and Local Government Committee inquiry into Local Plans; and
 - d. Home Affairs Committee inquiry into proceeds of crime. The team also briefed the Head of the Economic Crime Directorate ahead of his giving oral evidence to the Committee.
5. The Office is promoting a private Bill to amend the legislation governing the City Corporation's Open Spaces on behalf of the Corporation. A petition has been submitted by the Kennel Club against enforcement provisions in the Bill relating to anti-social behaviour powers (seeking greater transparency about their use) and their objections will be considered at an Opposed Bill Committee which is due to take place in November. Extensive engagement with stakeholders took place during the drafting process in order to reach as much consensus as possible on provisions in the Bill.
6. The UK's future relationship with the European Union will remain the focus in both Houses as the Government prepares to trigger Article 50 of the EU Treaty. Other subjects likely to occupy MPs' and Peers' time include education, aviation capacity and the future of Heathrow, neighbourhood planning, infrastructure and the digital economy.
7. Working 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 arts education, the creative industries, the economy, broadband, housing supply in London, traffic law, fraud and air quality.
8. Following the Mayoral and Assembly elections in May, the Office circulated an internal briefing on the outcome of the elections and the composition of the new Assembly, including biographical information for each Assembly Member. The Office is developing its relationship with the offices of new Assembly Members, including that of Unmesh Desai, the Assembly Member for City and East.
9. A member of the Office will be attending the three main Party Conferences to monitor proceedings and identify policy developments. Full reports on each conference will be circulated to recipients of the Parliamentary Brief.

City events

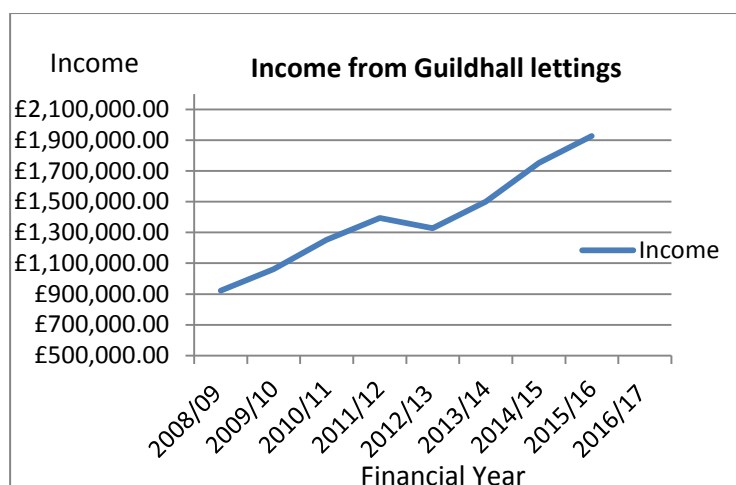
10. The City hosted a dinner to coincide with the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development's (EBRD) annual meeting held in London earlier this year. The primary objective of the EBRD is to assist countries' transition to market economies and the meeting includes a programme of business focused events and seminars which are attended by Governors of the EBRD (normally politicians at Finance Minister level appointed by each of the participating countries). The Bank also provides project financing, and supports privatisation, restructuring of state-owned firms and improvement of municipal services.

11. A reception for the Financial Markets Law Committee in recognition of the importance of their work was held at Guildhall. The role of the FMLC is to identify issues of legal uncertainty affecting the wholesale financial markets, and to consider how such issues should be addressed. It publishes reports and provides comments on a wide variety of legal issues and its views are highly regarded by governments and regulators.
12. Following the EU referendum and discussions with the Irish Ambassador, the Irish Finance Minister gave a speech on the future of UK-Irish economic relations.
13. During the last six months the Office has organised a number of events to mark occasions of national importance, including receptions following the National Service of Thanksgiving to mark the 90th Birthday of Her Majesty The Queen, a march through the City of London by the Household Cavalry, and a lecture and reception to accompany the Battle of the Somme anniversary exhibition in Guildhall Yard.
14. The Office continues to deliver hospitality events in support of the Corporation's cultural strategy. The City's two Reserve Bands, the HAC and the Royal Yeomanry, were back in Guildhall Yard in July to perform public concerts; a reception was held in the Art Gallery to mark the Archives and Records annual conference; and an afternoon tea, hosted by the Lord Mayor, took place at Mansion House to mark the start of the Great Fire commemorations.
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16. In addition to the City's hospitality programme, the Office has organised 12 Committee events during the last six months including a dinner for the Health and Wellbeing Board, visits by the Open Spaces Committee to Dorneywood and Epping Forest, and the Port Health and Environmental Services Committee's annual river inspection.
17. The delivery of hospitality by the Remembrancer's Office, together with hospitality provided by Mansion House, the Economic Development Office and other departments, has been considered as part of the work of the City Events Management Group established to implement the effectiveness of hospitality review. Procedures and strategic objectives have been analysed and revised. The City Events Management Group reports separately to the Hospitality Working Party, and through it to this Committee, and to the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen.

Private events

18. The Guildhall marketing strategy introduced last year is being pro-actively implemented. Initiatives to promote Guildhall and increase income include hosting venue showcases to provide an opportunity to see the Guildhall; attending venue marketing events to introduce the Guildhall to potential new clients; membership of a City marketing consortium; and updating the Guildhall website and increasing use of social media.

19. As well as attracting new business, the Guildhall continues to accommodate many returning clients. These include the City Food Lecture, Eid in the City, Grocer Gold Awards, Wimbledon Champions Dinner, WSET Graduations, Save the Children and the City Property Association.
20. Income from private events for the six month period ending on 30 September has increased by £54,000 compared with the same period last year with slightly fewer individual uses, reflecting more large commercial events. The projected income for the full year now exceeds the target figure. The chart below shows that income is increasing year on year with an exception in 2012/13, the year of the Olympic Games in London and HM the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations when the City hosted a number of its own events to mark these occasions.



21. The City Venues Group (coordinated by the Remembrancer's Office) continues to help share best practice across City Corporation venues. Where possible, event enquiries are referred between City venues so as to keep business within City Corporation owned venues. Systems have been put in place to enable referrals between the venues to maximise the opportunities to offer accommodation.
22. The Office, in conjunction with the Chamberlain and City Surveyor's departments, has undertaken a thorough review of the charging policy for hiring Guildhall and a report will be submitted to this Committee and its Hospitality Working Party later this year.
23. To ensure we are able to provide a first class service and facilities to clients hiring Guildhall, the Office continues to work with the City Surveyor's Guildhall Manager to develop an effective maintenance and cleaning programme for Guildhall. The Office is in regular liaison with the Facilities Management to monitor the progress of the West Wing cloakroom project.

Office management

24. Changes arising from the hospitality review and staff vacancies have enabled the Office to reallocate responsibilities to assist cross-team working and recruit staff with key skills, including commercial events experience. There may be a requirement for additional resources to support the marketing strategy and a growing number of larger commercial events.
25. A recruitment exercise to enhance the Office's pool of casual staff has also taken place to ensure sufficient staff resources are available during events.
26. The Remembrancer attended the Audit and Risk Management Committee in June for an informal 'risk challenge' session. These sessions provide an opportunity for Chief Officers to update the Committee on their significant risks and explain the actions being taken to mitigate them.
27. The Office participates in a number of City Corporation initiatives including projects relating to IS, equality, business planning, health and safety, business continuity, security and emergency planning.

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