

<b>Committee(s)</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Establishment Committee	15 January 2017
<b>Subject:</b> Update on strategic approach to working with volunteers	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> The Town Clerk	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Julia Makin, Corporate Strategy Officer	

### **Summary**

This report provides the Establishment Committee with an update on the development of a strategic approach which will strengthen practices related to volunteering accross the City of London Corporation. The approach is being led by the Corporate Strategy and Performance Team, within the Town Clerk's department, and is informed by the work of the Volunteering Working Group and ongoing support from a range of departments and divisions.

### **Recommendation(s)**

The Establishment Committee is asked to note:

- the scope and purpose of the strategy in relation to the Committee's original question;
- the strategy milestones; and
- the progress of the work to date.

### **Main Report**

#### **Background**

1. A report was presented at the Establishment Committee on 17 October 2017 to answer questions raised at the 19 June 2017 Establishment Committee, relating to: the extent and involvement of volunteers in the City Corporation's work; the protocols used across the organisation; and the duty of care discharged towards volunteers.
2. The paper set out the recommendations of an independent review of volunteering commissioned by the Department of Community and Children's Services (DCCS) in 2015, and how these recommendations were being driven forward by a cross-departmental Volunteering Working Group. A key recommendation was to develop a strategic approach, a robust needs analysis and a priority focus.
3. Since October 2017, a Corporate Strategy Officer has been recruited to the Corporate Strategy and Performance Team and tasked with working with the Volunteer Working Group to develop a strategic approach to volunteering across the City Corporation. This will enable the City Corporation to scope recommendations and deliver actions to achieve the greatest possible positive impact for volunteers and associated stakeholders, including the City Corporation.

### **Current Position**

4. To inform the development of the Volunteering Strategy, an appreciative enquiry has been conducted, consisting of structured meetings with Volunteering Working Group members and additional staff whose work relates to volunteering.
5. The meetings scoped the City Corporation's current practices in relation to:
  - Volunteering to support City Corporation services and governance (including service delivery, Members and School Governors);
  - Volunteering by City Corporation residents and students (including for the City Corporation and external organisations and causes); and
  - Volunteering by City Corporation employees.

A strategic development meeting with Volunteering Working Group members and additional staff, scheduled for 9 January 2018, will look at these areas in more detail, to highlight opportunity and priority areas.

6. The meetings also focussed on identifying stakeholders upon whom the impacts of volunteering were felt to be strongest. These were defined as:
  - Volunteers (including individuals, City Corporation employees and external corporate volunteers);
  - The City Corporation (related to its reputation, achieving corporate aims, efficiency and staff development and engagement); and
  - Beneficiaries of volunteer-supported services (including users of community services and assets, such as libraries, open spaces and heritage, culture, education and schools).
7. Representatives of these three groups have been invited to attend an evening event on 18 January 2018, to explore the impact that volunteering has on them and discuss how their needs could be better met by improving volunteering practices. An online survey is available for those unable to attend in person.
8. The results of this consultation will support the development of a draft Volunteering Strategy, due at the end of February 2018. The draft will receive further review at Chief Officers Group and Summit Group thereafter, before full approval is sought by June 2018.

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

9. The development of the Volunteering Strategy coincides with the publication of the City Corporation's Corporate Plan, 2018-2023, and a strategic review within City Bridge Trust (CBT) that informs their next five years of charitable spend. It also has the potential to align with other emerging strategies and policies related to Responsible Business, Philanthropy, Education, Employability and Work Experience. By taking the opportunity to link with these strategies and identify shared aims, the City Corporation will be able to develop its

volunteering practice to achieve the greatest possible positive impact for volunteers and associated stakeholders.

10. In order to test this strategic approach, an opportunity has been identified by the Economic Development Office, Human Resources and CBT to pilot a more coordinated approach to the Employee Volunteering Programme (EVP). This would aim to support CBT's new 'total assets' approach (i.e. using all of our resources, both financial and non-financial, including the giving of time and skills) by providing volunteers for CBT grantees, and would respond to employee requests for a broader remit to the EVP.
11. The new approach to the EVP will be piloted from early 2018, subject to Summit Group approval. It aims to coordinate these needs and create better impact. The development of the Volunteering Strategy provides a framework to support and evaluate this pilot, ensuring that departments are working together to scope recommendations related to developing volunteering practice, and that needs and impacts are identified at the start and monitored throughout the pilot.
12. The development of a Volunteering Strategy responds to the questions raised by Establishment Committee in January 2017 (see paragraph 1), by: defining a rationale for identifying and consolidating successful practices; re-aligning or repositioning areas where greater cross-departmental working could improve practice; resourcing the delivery of new workstreams or contracts; and ending workstreams or contracts that are not achieving the required impact.

### **Conclusion**

13. The Volunteering Strategy is progressing well and will be available in draft by the end of February 2018. It will enable the City Corporation to scope recommendations and deliver actions which will have the greatest possible positive impact on volunteers, their beneficiaries and the City Corporation.

### **Appendices**

- None

### **Background Papers**

- Establishment Committee - Use of Volunteers. 17 October 2017

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