

Committee(s) Public Relations and Economic Development Sub Committee	Dated: 29 May 2018
Subject: Towards a Sustainable Future: The City of London Corporation's Responsible Business Strategy, 2018-23	Public
Report of: The Chamberlain and the Chief Grants Officer	For Decision
Report author: Amelia Ehren, Corporate Strategy Officer	

Summary

This paper presents the current draft version of 'Towards a Sustainable Future: The City of London Corporation's Responsible Business Strategy, 2018-23'. The strategy states a commitment by the City of London Corporation (City Corporation) to 'creating a positive impact and reducing negative impact across all our activities and decisions because it is the right thing to do and will help ensure a sustainable future.' It sets out how the City Corporation will create social and environmental value by adopting responsible business practices throughout its day-to-day work and decision making, to create a future where:

1. Individuals and communities flourish; and
2. The planet is healthier.

The paper also outlines the process by which this strategy was developed, including the role of the Responsible Business Task and Finish Group which is chaired by your Chamberlain and your Chief Grants Officer, the next steps for its implementation and its corporate implications, with specific reference to implications for the Economic Development Office (EDO). Amended versions of this paper will be presented to several other committees, as outlined in paragraph 8, to highlight the relevant implications for each committee. The paper seeks comments and input from Members on the current draft version, to be incorporated into a final version, which will go to Policy and Resources Committee for approval in July 2018.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- i. Comment and provide feedback on the current draft version of 'Towards a Sustainable Future: The City of London Corporation's Responsible Business Strategy, 2018-23' at **Appendix 1**.

Main Report

Background

1. We are in an era when organisations are asked to look beyond their core business and consider the ways in which they might create and sustain social and

environmental value. As an organisation with private, public and charitable and community sector responsibilities, and significant capabilities and commitments, the City Corporation is well placed to role model responsible business practices internally across all our activities and externally across all three sectors.

2. The strategy brings together two strands of work where we can make an impact. These are:
 - Impact achieved in pursuit of our core purpose, how we deliver our operations and how we procure our resources.
 - Impact achieved through our advocacy and role-modelling to others.

By bringing together these two strands of work into one corporate strategy, the City Corporation can make sure it is doing all it can to move towards a sustainable future. It strengthens the City Corporation's internal practices and its outward-facing commitments to promoting responsible business across multiple sectors. It will also offer additional coherence and consistency to EDO's responsible business campaigns and the Lord Mayor's 'Business of Trust' campaign.

3. In June 2017, the City Corporation commissioned a review of its internal responsible business practices using the B-Lab UK model. The review highlighted many areas of excellence and a variety of recommendations to strengthen the City Corporation's work.
4. In September 2017 an Internal Responsible Business Task and Finish Group (TFG), co-chaired by your Chamberlain and your Chief Grants Officer, was set up to act as the advisory group to support the development of the strategy.
5. The draft strategy, **at Appendix 1**, was developed through a collaborative and participatory approach with the TFG, key departments and staff across the organisation. The TFG initially reviewed the recommendations from the B-Lab review alongside the 90 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. These 90 sustainability issues were then narrowed down to 19 issues by:
 - Conducting a materiality assessment, which is an exercise in stakeholder engagement that helps define and determine the environmental, social and governance issues that are most relevant to delivering the outcomes in the Corporate Plan 2018-23; and
 - Carrying out internal consultation with staff in the form of meetings with relevant departments and an online staff survey, completed by 147 respondents. The consultation process enabled staff to give their views on which topics and issues were most important to them.

More details of the materiality assessment process can be found on pages 11-13 in **Appendix 1**.

6. The strategy builds upon the successes and achievements of the City Corporation to date in this area and considers the ways in which it can improve its responsible business practices, by capturing what is already doing and outlining other actions that it can take to contribute further to a truly sustainable future.

Current position

7. The strategy describes the City Corporation's continuous and substantive commitment to creating positive impact and reducing negative impact on society and the environment across all its activities and decisions, to help ensure a sustainable future. It makes clear the City Corporation's commitment to responsible business and how this will be fulfilled, set within the framework of the Corporate Plan 2018-23. The strategy identifies eight topics, across two themes, and sets out how it will drive activity in these areas. The strategy is summarised below:

Our commitment	We are committed to creating positive impact and reducing negative impact across all our activities and decisions because it is the right thing to do and will help ensure a sustainable future.	
We will achieve this by...	<p>Focusing our efforts on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Impact achieved in pursuit of our core purpose, how we deliver our operations and how we procure our resources. ➤ Impact achieved through our advocacy and role-modelling to others. <p>Using responsible business practices through our every day work and decision making to ensure that we conduct ourselves in the most ethical and responsible ways possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Engaging our employees ➤ Using our convening power ➤ Connecting our communities ➤ Ensuring transparency ➤ Championing responsible investment ➤ Leading responsible procurement ➤ Preventing bribery, fraud and corruption ➤ Promoting human rights 	
To create a future where...	<p>Individuals and communities flourish</p> <p>Create and champion equal opportunities, diversity and inclusion across our organisation, and networks; and safeguard people and communities from social issues impacting London.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ People's wellbeing ➤ Equal opportunities ➤ Diverse organisations 	<p>The planet is healthier</p> <p>Reduce our environmental impact across all our operations while increasing our positive impact through cleaning, greening, advocacy and influencing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Air quality ➤ Waste ➤ Plastics and packaging ➤ Climate change ➤ Loss of biodiversity
Resulting in...	<p>An organisation that makes the right decisions</p> <p>An organisation that works collaboratively and innovatively to achieve positive impact</p> <p>An organisation that is trustworthy</p> <p>An organisation that leads the way in responsible business</p>	
Corporate Plan 2018-23 links	This strategy is one of the main mechanisms for delivering Outcome 5: Businesses are trusted and socially and environmentally responsible. It also directly supports the achievement of Outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 11 and 12.	

Next steps

8. As part of the Member consultation on this strategy, the current draft version will also be presented to the committees below. The feedback received from Members will feed into the final version of the strategy, which will then be taken to Policy and Resources Committee in July for final approval.

Committee	Date
City Bridge Trust Committee	2 May 2018
Markets Committee	9 May 2018
Establishment Committee	22 May 2018
Port Health and Environmental Services Committee	22 May 2018

Planning and Transportation Committee	29 May 2018
Open Spaces Committee	4 June 2018
Community and Children Services Committee	8 June 2018

9. As the strategy will have specific implications for different departments and divisions within the City Corporation, a slightly amended version of this paper will be presented to each committee to highlight the relevant implications.

Implementation

10. The strategy outlines the following five next steps that are essential in implementing the strategy successfully over the next five years.

- To bring together good practice.
- To assign lead officers and develop action plans.
- To monitor and report.
- To define success.
- To tell the City Corporation's story on responsible business.

11. The TFG has been repurposed to continue with the same Chairs and become the Responsible Business Implementation Group (RBIG). It will drive forward the implementation of the strategy and lead on devising detailed and SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-limited) action plans relating to each outcome area.

12. The success of the strategy also relies on the continued support of Members and staff, who will be enabled to take collective responsibility for making responsible business part of the City Corporation's everyday work. To engage Members and staff with the strategy, a Communications Plan will be developed. Activities and engagement channels in the Plan will include: a Members' briefing session, the Senior Leaders Forum in September, the Corporate Plan staff engagement sessions and an internal communications campaign.

13. The strategy will be regularly reviewed over the five-year term, to ensure it is a live document that is relevant and responsive to the issues of the time, which allows for new ideas and opportunities to be integrated into it.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

14. To achieve the outcomes set out in the Corporate Plan 2018-23, the City Corporation will need to consider how best to maximise social and environmental benefits through its business activities and its work with others.

15. The strategy is one of the main mechanisms for delivering Corporate Plan Outcome 5 – *Businesses are trusted and socially and environmentally responsible* – as it embeds responsible business practices throughout the organisation and across its operations and activities.

16. Although the principles in the strategy are integrated into all the Corporate Plan outcomes, it directly supports the achievement of the outcomes below, through the actions outlined under each of the priority areas.

- Outcome 1 – People are safe and feel safe.
- Outcome 2 – People enjoy good health and wellbeing.
- Outcome 3 – People have equal opportunities to enrich their lives and reach their full potential.
- Outcome 4 – Communities are cohesive and have the facilities they need.
- Outcome 8 – We have access to the skills and talent we need.
- Outcome 11 – We have clean air, land and water and a thriving and sustainable natural environment.
- Outcome 12 – Our spaces are secure, resilient and well-maintained.

17. It is your Chamberlain and Chief Grants Officer's belief that EDO will have an essential role in delivering this strategy, particularly due to the external facing nature of its work and its connection to the Financial and Professional Services sector. EDO are in a position to contribute to 'Outcome 1: Individuals and communities flourish' through its priorities around 'People's wellbeing', 'Equal opportunities' and 'Diverse organisations'. EDO will have a part to play in embedding the responsible businesses practices set out in the strategy within their day-to-day work, procurement processes and decision-making. Additionally, through their spheres of influence, they are well placed to share the City Corporation's stories of change and impact with other businesses, in the hope it will inspire their own responsible business journeys.

Conclusion

18. 'Towards a Sustainable Future: The City of London Corporation's Responsible Business Strategy' sets out a commitment to creating positive impact and reducing negative impact across all the City Corporation's activities and decision to help ensure a sustainable future where individuals and communities flourish and the planet is healthier. It is hoped that the strategy will have been through all officer and Member governance by July 2018, for it to be launched at the Senior's Leader Forum in September 2018.

Appendices

- Appendix 1- Towards a Sustainable Future: The City of London Corporation's Responsible Business Strategy, 2018-23.

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