

Committee: Policy and Resources Committee	Date: 5 July 2018
Subject: Responsible Business Strategy, 2018-23 – Towards a Sustainable Future	Public
Report of: The Chamberlain and the Chief Grants Officer	For decision
Report author: Amelia Ehren, Corporate Strategy Officer	

Summary

This paper seeks approval for the City of London Corporation's 'Responsible Business Strategy, 2018-23 – Towards a Sustainable Future'. The strategy seeks to commit 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 to do and will help ensure a sustainable future'. It outlines how, by adopting responsible business practices throughout the City Corporation's day-to-day work and decision making, the organisation will create social and environmental value, for a future where:

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

The paper also highlights how the strategy was developed, including a summary of the feedback received during Member consultation on the strategy, its corporate implications and an overview of how it will be implemented.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- Approve the 'Responsible Business Strategy, 2018-23 – Towards a Sustainable Future', at **Appendix 1**.

Main report

Background

1. Increasingly organisations are being encouraged 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. 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.

3. In September 2018 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.
4. The 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. 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 the final two pages of **Appendix 1**.

5. In May 2018, Member consultation on the strategy began and a draft version of the strategy was presented to the following committees: City Bridge Trust, Markets, Establishment, Port Health and Environmental Services, Planning and Transportation, Public Relations and Economic Development Sub, Open Spaces, and Community and Children Services. The feedback received from Members was very positive and constructive, with clear encouragement for setting ambitious targets and ensuring the strategy becomes a reality through its successful implementation and resourcing. It was also recommended to include a strengthened commitment on the reduction of the use of diesel vehicles for staff and Members, and to also emphasise the achievements the City Corporation has made already in some of the priority areas e.g. air quality. The feedback received has been incorporated into the strategy, **at Appendix 1**.

Current position

6. The strategy describes the City Corporation's continuous and substantive commitment to creating positive impact and reducing negative 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.
7. 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 it is already doing and outlining other actions that it can take to contribute further to a truly sustainable future. A one-page summary of the strategy can be found on the third page of **Appendix 1**.

Implementation

9. The strategy recommends the following five steps for implementing the strategy successfully over the next five years:

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

The next steps are explained in further detail on page 9 of the strategy, at **Appendix 1**.

10. The TFG has been repurposed to continue with the same Chairs and become the Responsible Business Implementation Group (RBIG). The purpose of the group is to lead on devising detailed and SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-limited) action plans relating to each outcome area and lead on the development of a performance management framework for the strategy.

11. The RBIG is a cross-departmental body made up of officers from the following departments: Chamberlain's, Town Clerk's (City Bridge Trust, HR, EDO and the Corporate Strategy & Performance Team), Markets and Consumer Protection, Built Environment and Open Spaces. The RBIG has identified lead roles for each priority area within the strategy to ensure its successful implementation.

12. The success of the strategy also relies on the continued support of staff and Members in taking collective responsibility for making responsible business part of the City Corporation's everyday work. The RBIG will develop a detailed communications plan to ensure the strategy is embedded across the organisation and appropriate external messages are delivered. Member and staff buy-in to the strategy will be gained through a series of engagement channels and activities. Activities will include: a Member briefing session, the Senior Leaders Forum in September 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.

14. Ongoing staff resource will be needed to ensure the successful implementation of this strategy and to provide oversight of the RBIG. In the short-term, there is existing resource within EDO and in the Corporate Strategy & Performance Team, available until May 2019. With changes to EDO's current structure, a long-term resource will be sought to drive forward the responsible business agenda across the organisation, to support the implementation of this strategy and to drive

continuous improvement in this area of work. There is no request for funding currently being proposed.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

15. 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.
16. 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.
17. 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.

Conclusion

18. The 'Responsible Business Strategy, 2018-23 – Towards a Sustainable Future' sets out a commitment to creating positive impact and reducing negative impact across all the City Corporation's activities and decisions 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 for July 2018, for it to be launched at the Senior Leaders Forum in September 2018.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Responsible Business Strategy, 2018-23 - Towards a Sustainable Future.

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