

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

Thursday, 21 November 2013

Minutes of the meeting of the Public Relations and Economic Development Sub-Committee held at the Guildhall EC2 at 2.45pm

Present

Members:

Mark Boleat (Chairman)	Oliver Lodge
Deputy Catherine McGuinness (Deputy Chairman)	Jeremy Mayhew
Deputy Douglas Barrow	Ian Seaton
Roger Chadwick	James Tumbridge
Stuart Fraser	Alderman Alan Yarrow
Wendy Hyde	

Officers:

Simon Murrells	- Assistant Town Clerk
Gemma Stokley	- Town Clerk's Department
Paul Double	- City Remembrancer
Tony Halmos	- Director of Public Relations
Liz Skelcher	- Economic Development Office
Giles French	- Assistant Director of Economic Development
Greg Williams	- Assistant Director of PR (Press)
Adam Maddock	- Senior Corporate Affairs Officer
Isabelle Almeida	- Marketing and Communications Manager, EDO
Laura Davison	- Head of Research, EDO

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Deputy Alex Deane, Edward Lord and Sir Michael Snyder.

2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

The Chairman declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to agenda item 6. He reported that 'Cicero Consulting' had recently acquired the assets ("Yatterbox") of a company of which he had been Chairman.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2013 were considered and approved as a correct record.

4. CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION: UPDATE ON PARTY CONFERENCE ACTIVITIES

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Director of Public Relations updating Members on the City Corporation's Party Conference Activities.

It was suggested that, in future, it would be beneficial to take a more strategic approach and provide Members with a broad steer as to what events it would be most advisable for them to attend. It was also suggested that it would be helpful for Officers to circulate to all City of London attendees a list of all other Members and Officers attending a conference so that efforts could be co-ordinated.

In response to a question regarding those who received invitations to City hosted dinners during the Party Conferences, the Director of Public Relations stated that Officers looked at suitable categories of people to invite as opposed to specific individuals. Views from members on possible guests were always welcome.

RECEIVED.

5. RESEARCH PROGRAMME 2013

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Head of Research, EDO, providing Members with an update on current activities and priorities for the research programme. The report also set out a short summary of the research pieces due to be published by the end of 2013, and noted the new research that has been commissioned since the last meeting of the Sub-Committee.

The Chairman underlined that the City's research programme was very highly regarded externally.

In response to questions regarding the 'Total Tax' publication, the Chairman highlighted that this was the sixth edition and that it was therefore important to retain the 'core' of the research whilst also considering if it were possible to look at additional areas such as that tax contribution made by professional services to the UK economy and the tax contribution of sectors providing services to the financial services industry.

Discussion ensued around the continuing need for the City Corporation to engage with positively in the debate around aviation capacity options for the South East. The Head of Research stated that a draft publication which was set to feed into the Davies Commission's review of longer term options was now available and that she was happy to share this with Members should they wish.

RECEIVED.

6. CHAIRMAN'S VISIT TO SINGAPORE

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Director of Economic Development informing Members of the outcomes of the recent visit by the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee to Singapore from 27 to 29 October 2013.

In response to a question, the Assistant Director of Economic Development reported that approximately £35,000 had been allocated for the development of the Singapore initiative, including the cost of the visit. He undertook to report back to the Member concerned as to the actual cost of the trip.

The Chairman highlighted that this had been an extremely useful and informative 'exploratory' visit.

RECEIVED.

7. **THE INDUSTRY BRIEFING COURSE FOR UKTI OFFICERS AND FCO PROSPERITY CHAMPIONS**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Director of Economic Development providing Members with an update on the recent Industry Briefing Course (IBC).

Members were supportive of the City Corporation's continuing involvement with the IBC. The Assistant Director of Economic Development reported that the event always generated lots of interest and positive feedback from attendees.

RECEIVED.

8. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE**

Media Coverage

The Sub Committee discussed the implications of a Guardian Blog piece written by a waitress at the Lord Mayor's Banquet.

A Member questioned whether further provisions could be made in temporary staff contracts in order to protect the privacy of the City of London Corporation.

The Remembrancer stated that if more could be done in terms of introducing additional measures in the context of an event then he would be happy to look into this. Members were accepting of the fact that media interest was unavoidable particularly at public events to which journalists were legitimately invited.

Members were informed that the Prime Minister's speech at the Lord Mayor's Banquet usually focused on foreign affairs and that this was perhaps the most appropriate subject given the settings and attendees.

Social Media

Members suggested that it would be useful to be provided with some training on the use of Social Media. The Town Clerk reported that this was to be addressed via a rolling Member Development Programme set to run, initially, from February – April 2014.

The Chairman stated that he regularly 'tweeted' in his capacity as Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee, finding this a useful means of disseminating key messages.

A Member commented that it was now also possible to refer to personal twitter accounts on the City's business cards.

9. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**
Europe

The Chairman took the opportunity to update the Sub-Committee on Europe.

He stated that the debate around Europe had now moved on significantly and that a clear business view had emerged -that Britain needed to be a member of and fully engaged in the European Union in order to ensure the best outcomes for the economy.

Members were informed that City businesses had made it clear that they were keen for the City Corporation and CityUK to be vocal in this debate and put across the 'City view'.

Members referred to the importance of the reform debate/agenda and underlined that the best way to contribute to this would be from inside the EU.

The meeting closed at 3.50pm

Chairman

Contact Officer: Gemma Stokley
tel. no.: 020 7332 1427
gemma.stokley@cityoflondon.gov.uk