

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

Thursday, 20 February 2014

Minutes of the meeting of the Public Relations and Economic Development Sub-Committee held at the Guildhall EC2 at 11.00am

Present

Members:

Mark Boleat (Chairman)	Oliver Lodge
Deputy Catherine McGuinness (Deputy Chairman)	Edward Lord
Deputy Douglas Barrow	Jeremy Mayhew
Roger Chadwick	Ian Seaton
Wendy Hyde	Sir Michael Snyder

Officers:

Simon Murrells	- Assistant Town Clerk
Gemma Stokley	- Town Clerk's Department
Nigel Lefton	- Remembrancer's Department
Philip Saunders	- Remembrancer's Department
Tony Halmos	- Director of Public Relations
Greg Williams	- Assistant Director of PR: Media
Adam Maddock	- Assistant Director of PR: Corporate Affairs
Sheldon Hind	- Head of Publishing, PRO
Paul Sizeland	- Director of Economic Development
Giles French	- Assistant Director of Economic Development
Isabelle Almeida	- Marketing and Communications Manager (EDO)

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Deputy Michael Cassidy, Deputy Alex Deane, Sophie Fernandes, Stuart Fraser, James Tumbridge and Alderman Alan Yarrow.

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

There were no declarations.

3. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2013 were considered and approved as a correct record.

The Sub Committee noted comments made by Mr Tumbridge via email on the minutes.

The Director of Economic Development informed Members that copies of the aviation strategy were available in hard copy at today's meeting.

4. **CITY OF LONDON COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY 2014 - 2017**

The Sub Committee considered a report of the Director of Public Relations concerning the draft Communications Strategy for 2014-17.

A Member commented that she was surprised to see that the Strategy did not make reference to the Scottish referendum due to take place this Autumn, given the amount of discussion that this had created amongst the financial sector.

The Sub Committee was informed that the 'TheCityUK' was taking a pro-active lead on this matter and it was felt that it was the appropriate body for this. Members were keen for the City Corporation to help facilitate debate on this matter and to offer support where possible.

The Director of Public Relations undertook to include reference to this matter within the Communications Strategy.

A Member suggested that it would be helpful to see any changes to the Strategy from one year to the next clearly highlighted for ease of reference. The Director undertook to ensure that this was the case with future versions of the Strategy.

Finally, the Chairman stated that, in addition to encouraging the appointment of voters from City businesses, ensuring that they were as representative as possible was a key issue going forward.

RESOLVED – That, Members approve the Communications Strategy 2014-17, subject to the comments noted above, and recommend it for approval to the Policy and Resources Committee.

5. **PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICE BUSINESS PLAN, 2014 - 2017**

The Sub Committee considered a report of the Director of Public Relations setting out the Public Relations Office Business Plan for 2014-17.

The Chairman highlighted that the primary purpose of Departmental Plans was to help focus staff on certain key issues and objectives going forward. In future, it was suggested that shorter summaries of the Plan be presented to the Sub Committee with the full plan appended to this.

In response to questions regarding efforts to encourage City businesses to register for votes, the Director of Public Relations listed the numerous in-house activities that take place and the resources that were dedicated to this exercise annually. Members suggested that it would also be helpful to include them in specific discussions concerning businesses within their Wards. It was suggested that short briefings could be offered to every Ward going forward to highlight any omissions and how best Members might assist the Public Relations Office in addressing these and establishing key contacts.

RESOLVED – That, Members approve the contents of the Public Relations Office Business Plan, 2014-17 and recommend it for approval to the Policy and Resources Committee.

6. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICE BUSINESS PLAN 2014-17

The Sub Committee considered a report of the Director of Economic Development setting out the Economic Development Office Business Plan for 2014-17.

The Director of Economic Development highlighted that Appendix E of his report entitled 'Summary Plan' would feature more prominently in the report submitted to the Grand Committee for approval next month.

A Member suggested that he felt that the City Corporation should take the lead on a programme to construct a package of EU reform for City businesses given that this was something that the industry was calling for and that voters were concerned about according to recent TheCityUK surveys.

The Chairman commented that TheCityUK was already engaging with City Institutions on this matter with City Corporation Officers also heavily involved.

Members were of the view that, whilst there would clearly be no value in the City Corporation duplicating the work of the TheCityUK in this area, the two should combine efforts and work to highlight the issue as much as possible. The Sub Committee underlined the importance of creating a unifying message with the City Corporation participating at appropriate moments whilst also supporting and encouraging the work of the TheCityUK. The Director of Economic Development undertook to reflect this within his Business Plan.

RESOLVED – That, the Public Relations and Economic Development Sub Committee approve the content, and recommend approval by the Policy and Resources Committee, of the Economic Development Office Business Plan for 2014-17 and the associated budget, which will be the subject of regular scrutiny against the backdrop of the City Corporation's financial position.

7. CITY OFFICE BRUSSELS ANNUAL RECEPTION

The Sub Committee considered a report of the Director of Economic Development providing Members with the history and purpose of the City of London Corporation's annual reception in Brussels. The report explains how the reception is organised and makes recommendations for future Member participation.

A Member commented that he felt that a reception of 200 with only 2 Members as host representatives seemed too few.

The Chairman commented that he found it difficult to justify the costs associated with sending additional attendees to the reception which lasted for just 90 minutes. A Member commented that the event continued to be a great success but revolved largely around the Chairman with limited time available

for networking. He stated that it was not an event at which additional Member presence would be particularly useful.

The Sub Committee were of the view that up to three additional Members with relevant experience (including the Member who sits on the IRSG Council as an observer) should be able to accompany the Chairman at future receptions.

It was agreed Members attending the reception would receive the same briefing note as the Chairman, but they would not require additional Officer support.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- note the content of the report; and
- agree that Member representation at the annual Brussels reception is by the Chairman of the Policy & Resources Committee, the Member who sits on the IRSG Council as an observer and up to two other Members with relevant experience.

8. **DEVELOPMENT OF THE CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION'S ENGAGEMENT WITH EU INSTITUTIONS, DEVELOPMENT OF POLICY ON EU REGULATORY ISSUES, AND THE ROLE OF THE INTERNATIONAL REGULATORY STRATEGY GROUP (IRSG)**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Economic Development charting the development of the City of London's relationship with the EU, and how the City of London Corporation is contributing today to the policy dialogue. It also explains the development and role of the International Regulatory Strategy Group (IRSG).

A Member commented that, whilst he welcomed the recommendation of the report that these matters would be a standing item on the Sub Committee's agenda in future, he nevertheless thought that Member involvement in the work of the EDO was insufficient. The Member referred to two decisions in the last year that he believed should have been referred to Members of the Sub-Committee: to make a submission as the City of London Corporation to the Home Office's consultation on the Balance of Competences Review on the Free Movement of People in the EU, and to make a submission to the HM Treasury's Balance of Competences consultation on Financial Services and Capital Markets, as the IRSG (which was circulated as an annex to the report).

The Director of Economic Development said he would welcome any Member feedback on the IRSG submission to the Balance of Competences Review

Other Members sympathised with this view and accepted that, whilst the Chairman and Officers need flexibility and the ability to form views between meetings, where a response was submitted on behalf of the City Corporation, Member oversight and engagement should be increased.

Members commented that it would be useful to see certain documents in draft before these were finalised.

Whilst it was recognised that it would not be practicable for the Sub-Committee to receive drafts of all policy papers, or to have final 'sign off', it was agreed that Members should have the opportunity to input into these relevant papers at an appropriate stage and that drafts of papers be circulated between Sub Committee meetings where more urgent timeframes applied.

It was also noted that the Sub-Committee would not seek 'sign off' on policy papers produced on behalf of the IRSG practitioner group, who act in an advisory capacity to the City Corporation (and to TheCityUK).

A Member suggested a schedule could be tabled at Sub-Committee meetings, documenting recent IRSG work and proposed future activity, to provide an opportunity for Member input.

The Chairman stated that, prior to the expansion in 2013 of the PR Sub Committee to include Economic Development, Member involvement in these type of matters had been minimal. He added that the Corporation's response to Government on immigration contained no 'new' views that Members had not already been made aware of.

RESOLVED: That:

- the Committee supports the current arrangements for consideration of regulatory policy matters primarily through the International Regulatory Strategy Group (IRSG); and
- agree that these matters will, in addition, be a standing item on the PR/ED Sub Committee agenda on the basis described above.

9. UPDATE ON THE FINANCIAL SERVICES (BANKING REFORM) ACT

The Sub Committee received a report of the Remembrancer providing an overview of the combined effects of the legislation.

RESOLVED – That, the report of the Remembrancer be received.

10. LORD MAYOR'S SHOW FIREWORKS

The Director of Public Relations was heard relative to the Lord Mayor's Show Fireworks.

Members were informed that this would be the subject of a full report to the Policy and Resources Committee in March 2014. The Director of Public Relations reminded the Sub Committee that it had been agreed, in June 2013, that the Fireworks display would take place for the next two years.

Members were informed that an increase in budget from the originally anticipated £93,000 to £115,000 would be required in 2014 – a sum which was still below that of 2013. The Director of Public Relations went on to state that Officers would also be seeking to appoint the same contractor as in 2013 without the need for competitive tender. From 2014 onwards, consideration would need to be given as to whether or not the Lord Mayor's Show Fireworks should continue.

RESOLVED – That, the Sub Committee recommend to the Policy and Resources Committee that:

- the Lord Mayor’s Show Fireworks for 2014 at a sum of £115,000; and
- the same contractor is appointed for a second year without entering into competitive tender.

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

A Member questioned if more could be done to take advantage of the City Corporation’s relationship with the TheCityUK and if more Member involvement could be encouraged at some of the larger TheCityUK events that were scheduled to take place.

The Director of Economic Development stated that EDO worked to actively promote these type of events amongst Members, particularly Members of this Sub Committee and added that increased Member participation would be very welcome going forward. EDO undertook to circulate to Members notice of major TheCityUK events

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

The Sub Committee agreed to consider one item in the non-public session.

RESOLVED – That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act. In addition, for one item which fell under paragraph 100A (2) of the Act relating to confidential information that would be disclosed in breach of an obligation of confidence:-

<u>Item Nos.</u>	<u>Exemption Paragraph(s)</u>
12	1

The meeting closed at 12.00pm

Chairman

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