

<b>Committee</b> Public Relations and Economic Development Sub (Policy and Resources) Committee	<b>Dated:</b> 05 November 2019
<b>Subject:</b> Corporate Affairs Update	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Bob Roberts, Director of Communications	<b>For Information</b>
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## Summary

This report provides a monthly update of the Corporate Affairs Team's activities in supporting the City Corporation's strategic political engagement.

The Corporate Affairs Team coordinates and organises the City Corporation's political engagement and supports both Members and officers in its delivery. The focus of this report is on the activity undertaken by the Policy Chair and the Lord Mayor.

The activities documented in this report focus largely on those led by the Corporate Affairs Team. Activities undertaken in partnership with other teams and/or departments are also included and have been appropriately termed.

Each area of activity is linked back to the objectives outlined in the Communications Business Plan.

The timeframe of this report spans the period lapsed between the previous and current meetings of this Sub Committee.

## Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note this report.

## Main Report

### Strategic Objectives

1. To fulfil the objectives set out in the Communications Business Plan set out for the Corporate Affairs Team.

### Overview

2. Based on developments in the domestic political and economic landscape and in line with the City Corporation's corporate priorities, the Corporate Affairs Team has focused its activity in the areas of engagement listed below.

## **Brexit**

3. Ahead of the United Kingdom's departure from the European Union, the Corporate Affairs Team:
  - a. Monitored political developments in the UK and EU ahead of the UK's stated departure date of 31<sup>st</sup> October;
  - b. Organised political engagement opportunities for the Policy Chair and Lord Mayor;
4. The above links to the following Business Plan objectives:
  - a. To have coordinated political engagement activity across the organisation;
  - b. To remain relevant in the policy-making and political sphere.

## **Domestic Political Engagement**

5. The Corporate Affairs Team organises engagement with key political representatives and decision-makers in government at local, regional and national levels and in September and October, this covers the annual party conference season.

## **Party Conferences**

- a. The Policy Chair and Members attended the Conservative Party conference which was in Manchester this year. She attended a private business dinner held by TCUK, where the guest speaker was Bim Afolami MP. The annual 1922 reception then followed, which was attended by a number of cabinet ministers and a keynote speech was given by the Home Secretary Priti Patel MP. The Policy Chair hosted, alongside the Director of the Centre for Policy Studies, a roundtable on the future of financial services after-Brexit. The guest speaker was City Minister John Glen MP. A mix of businesses and trade bodies were present. The City Corporation, The Law Society and the Policy Exchange, hosted an open fringe event on the importance of the Rule of Law. Secretary General Michael Ellis QC MP, The Law Society President Simon Davis and the Australian High Commissioner to the UK, Hon. George Brandis QC, joined the Policy Chair on the panel for a well-attended event. The Policy Chair made use of the Conservative Party's official Business Day, attending various cabinet ministers' panel discussions and engaging with high-level politicians and businesses at the Business Day lunch. The City Corporation's dinner guest speaker was Chris Philp MP, Parliamentary Secretary of State for Justice and Member for Croydon South. The dinner brought together local and national political figures and senior business representatives from the financial and professional services sector.
- b. A member of the Corporate Affairs Team provided a Member briefing for, and attended, the Green Party conference.
- c. The Policy Chair attended the Scottish National Party conference in Aberdeen, where she took part in a panel event convened by TheCityUK and Dods Magazine, entitled Innovating for the Future – Challenges and Opportunities for the financial and related professional services industry. She appeared on the panel with Stewart Hosie MP, Kirsty Blackman MP and Colin Beattie MSP.

Also in Aberdeen, the Policy Chair attended the SNP's private business dinner, where she held conversations with the First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon MSP, and other senior members of the Scottish Government, including the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, John Swinney MSP and the Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Economy and Fair Work, Derek Mackay MSP.

- d. Reports were circulated to Members after each Party Conference in collaboration with the REM Parliamentary office.
  - e. Following the discussion at the last PRED, Corporate Affairs will bring a report to PRED in early 2020 with suggested proposals to reflect Members' views on Party Conference activity.
  - f. Dinner venues and hotels have been booked for the Liberal Democrat, Labour and Conservative Party conferences in Autumn 2020.
6. The above links to the following Business Plan objectives:
- a. To remain relevant in the policy-making and political sphere;
  - b. To bring stakeholders together to discuss policy issues that affect them, and subsequently deliver on any desired outcome of that discussion.

## **National engagement**

### **7. The Corporate Affairs Team:**

- a. Organised and provided support for the Policy Chair's meetings with Nick Hurd MP, Lord Deben, Nadhim Zahawi MP and Wes Streeting MP.
- b. Provided support for Aldermen speaking at:
  - the Legal Geek conference in London
  - the State Bank of India Diwali reception
- c. Provided support for the Policy Chair speaking at:
  - a presentation to diplomats on the role of the City of London
  - events with the Austrian, Danish, Luxembourg and German Ambassadors
  - the City Corporation's reception and green finance seminar in Brussels
  - an event with Cicero and Chris Woolard of the FCA
  - the International Chamber of Commerce 'Going Global' conference
  - a lecture at the London Business School
- d. Provided support for Deputy Chairs of the Policy and Resources Committee speaking at:
  - a City Property Association seminar on 're-inventing Fleet Street'
  - an APPG for Digital Skills event

8. The above links to the following Business Plan objectives:
- a. To deliver clear, consistent and confident public messaging across the City Corporation;
  - b. To have coordinated political engagement activity across the organisation;
  - c. To remain relevant in the policy-making and political sphere;
  - d. To bring stakeholders together to discuss policy issues that affect them, and subsequently deliver on any desired outcome of that discussion.

## **International Engagement**

9. The Corporate Affairs Team assists the City Corporation's overseas engagements undertaken by the Policy Chair and Lord Mayor. The Corporate Affairs Team has:
  - a. Attended the annual Brussels reception, engaged with MEPs and Embassy representatives, and attended the Corporation's panel event with the GFI.
  - b. Provided support for Aldermen speaking at the IBA Conference in Seoul
  - c. Provided support for the Policy Chair speaking at the City Corporation's reception and green finance seminar in Brussels
10. The above links to the following Business Plan objectives:
  - a. To deliver clear, consistent and confident public messaging across the City Corporation.

### **London – Local engagement and London promotion**

11. The Corporate Affairs Team seeks to maintain and develop the City Corporation's engagement with communities, bodies and authorities across London.
  - a. The Policy Chair had her latest catch-up with Unmesh Desai, who represents the City on the London Assembly, where they talked about key ongoing issues of mutual interest, including an update on Unmesh's work on the Assembly which is of interest to the City of London Corporation.
  - b. Preparations are in place for a number of London Borough visits the Policy Chair is making in coming weeks, including to Harrow, Lewisham and Wandsworth, where she will meet the Borough Leaders and look at what more the City and each borough can do together
  - c. We are in the process of reaching out to the Mayoral candidates to discuss engagement ahead of the London Mayoral Election in May 2020.
12. The above links to the following Business Plan objectives:
  - a. To have coordinated political engagement activity across the organisation;
  - b. To remain relevant in the policy-making and political sphere;
  - c. To bring stakeholders together to discuss policy issues that affect them, and subsequently deliver on any desired outcome of that discussion.

### **Think-tanks and third-party organisations**

13. As part of the City Corporation's engagement with think tanks and other external organisations, the Corporate Affairs Team:
  - a. Organised and attended the Strand Group lecture and dinner event
  - b. Continues to organise the sponsorship of the Margaret Thatcher Lecture organised by the Centre for Policy Studies, to be held in March 2020
  - c. Met with Centre for Cities to look at partnership opportunities
  - d. Finalised the organisation of the upcoming Battle of Ideas Festival, held in the Barbican
  - e. Is reviewing think tank memberships ahead of the next calendar and financial year
14. The above links to the following Business Plan objectives:

- a. To bring stakeholders together to discuss policy issues that affect them, and subsequently deliver on any desired outcome of that discussion.

### **Priorities for the next quarter**

- 15. Priorities for the Corporate Affairs team over the next four months are:
  - a. Reviewing think tank memberships and looking at partnership opportunities
  - b. Monitoring the political environment and preparing for a General Election, with associated engagement opportunities
  - c. Organising the final wave of London Borough meetings for the Policy Chair, with the aim of having organised engagement with all 32 boroughs by the end of 2019. There are seven boroughs remaining to visit.
  - d. Continuing to effectively communicate **(a)** Brexit messaging and associated risks/opportunities and **(b)** the London Fundamentals messaging, to key political stakeholders
  - e. Continuing with the sports engagement programme which is the subject of a separate report to this Committee, every quarter.