

Committee(s)	Dated:
Public Relations and Economic Development Sub-Committee	16 September 2020
Subject: Parliamentary Team Update	Public
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Summary

This summary updates Members on the main elements of the Parliamentary Team's activity in support of the City of London Corporation's political and Parliamentary engagement since the last update in May 2020.

The summary is written with reference to the top line Parliamentary objectives and deliverables of the Remembrancer's Office Departmental Business Plan 2019-20. For the Committee's reference, these are set out in the appendix.

Recommendation

Members are recommended to note the report.

Main Report

Legislation Pertaining to the UK's Future EU Relationship (Objective 1)

1. Legislation in several areas is particularly affected by the UK's departure from the EU, examples include:

Trade Bill – The Bill was introduced in the previous session of Parliament. It was re-introduced in March following the General Election, and has passed through the Commons and awaits detailed consideration in the Lords. The Bill makes provision for the UK to enter into trade agreements with countries with which the EU has existing trade agreements and establishes a UK Trade Remedies Authority which will handle trade disputes. A submission to the Bill's Public Bill Committee was made in June.

Immigration Bill – The Immigration Bill was reported to Policy and Resources Committee and submissions based on the City Corporation's visa research were made to the Government consultation and the Commons Public Bill Committee. A submission was made during the Bill's Second Reading in the House of Lords.

Private International Law (Implementation of Agreements) Bill – The Bill implements international conventions on 1996 and 2007 Hague Conventions applicable to family law and the 2005 Hague Convention on Choice of Court Agreements relating to commercial law. Additionally, the Bill would provide

Ministers with delegated powers to implement the 2007 Lugano Convention – and other agreements - in domestic law. This would provide cross border recognition and enforcement of judgments in civil and commercial matters. It is, however, subject to the agreement of other contracting states, including the EU. The Bill has a substantial commercial law interest on which technical input is being maintained in liaison with the professional institutions. The Bill is in the Commons, having passed through the Lords.

Corporation legislation (Objective 2)

2. The Emissions Reduction (Local Authorities in London) Bill, which had its First Reading in the Lords on 13 January still awaits a date for Second Reading following the disruption to parliamentary business cause by the pandemic.
3. Following the decision of the Court on 25 April 2019 that the Corporation's three wholesale markets should be relocated, work on a private bill relating to the relocation of the Corporation's markets continues to be developed. The Office is providing extensive strategic advice and legal opinions for the programme. Considerable support is being given to the programme directorate in collating and building the evidence basis for a bill promotion.

Parliamentary and Government Inquiries (Objective 3)

4. The Office has submitted the following pieces of written evidence to Select Committees since the last report:
 - to the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee's inquiry into the impact of COVID-19 on DCMS sectors. The submission examined the impact of COVID-19 on the City's cultural attractions, cultural initiatives taken during lockdown, and the support needed by the sector to aid its recovery.
 - to the Lords Public Services Committee's inquiry into the lessons from coronavirus. The submission discussed digital innovation during lockdown, identifying and meeting the needs of vulnerable groups, integration of services, and the experience of the City Bridge Trust in the 'Funders, Community and Voluntary Sector Cell'.
 - to the Environment Committee's inquiry into air quality, reiterating that more powers are needed to address air quality issue in the Square Mile.
 - to the Business Committee's inquiry into post-pandemic growth. The submission discusses the need for the UK FS sector to maintain its competitiveness to drive economic recovery and the importance of 'greening' the recovery.
 - to the Lords EU Services Sub Committee's inquiry into the future of professional services. The submission highlighted the priorities for the FPS sector in any UK-EU trade agreement, and emphasised the importance of UK accession to the Lugano Convention.
 - to the Lords International Agreements Committee inquiry into UK-US relations. The submission discussed UK-US trade in services, the priorities for a UK-US trade agreement, and UK-US regulatory dialogue.
 - to the Treasury Committee's inquiry into the economic impact of coronavirus, which discussed how the sector and the City Corporation had responded to the pandemic, innovation in the sector and the need to

embed sustainability into finance, and to pursue a trade deal with the EU. Supplementary evidence was submitted to the Home Affairs Committee following the City of London Police's appearance before the Committee as part of its inquiry into Home Office preparedness for COVID-19.

Responding to Issues Raised in Parliament (Objective 4)

5. City MP Nickie Aiken was provided with a briefing on green finance ahead of her contribution to the debate which followed the Chancellor's Economic Statement. In her speech, she highlighted the City's strengths in green finance and the forthcoming City Corporation-hosted green finance summit.
6. City MP Nickie Aiken was provided with a draft Parliamentary Question which raised the issue of UK-EU equivalence assessments ahead of an Urgent Question on the progress of negotiations with the EU.
7. Briefings on statements regarding the lifting of lockdown restrictions and on the future of the Job Retention Scheme were supplied to members of Policy & Resources, PRED, and Officers.

Enhancing Parliamentary Engagement (Objective 5)

8. The Office prepared the following briefings for MPs and peers since the last report:
 - to Baroness Kennedy on the impact of COVID-19 on LSO musicians ahead of a question on support for the music sector, particularly the self-employed.
 - to the Earl of Clancarty on FPS priorities for a UK-EU trade deal on services.
 - to Lord Colgrain ahead of a question on tree planting. The briefing emphasised the need for appropriate phytosanitary checks and increased native tree stocks to prevent pests and diseases being introduced to the UK via imported plants.
 - Lord Aberdare was sent a briefing on the City Corporation's Fusion Skills agenda ahead of a question on preparing young people for work in a post-COVID environment.
 - Lord Framlingham, having tabled a question regarding the tree disease *Xylella Fastidiosa* was sent a briefing detailing the City Corporation's efforts to address pests and diseases in its open spaces.
 - Baroness McIntosh asked the Government about the impact of COVID-19 on airlines, and was sent a briefing on the Corporation's call for 'business air bridges' to be established.
 - Dr Liam Fox was briefed on the Corporation's concern over quarantine regulations for international travellers and the need for business air bridges
 - Lord Trefgarne was sent a briefing on efforts to tackle increased levels of fly tipping during the COVID-19 lockdown ahead of a parliamentary question on the issue.
 - MPs Huw Merriman, Mark Pawsey, Sir Desmond Swayne, Sir Geoffrey Clifton Brown, James Sunderland, Henry Smith, Theresa Villiers, Ben Spencer, Steve Brine, Jonathan Gullis, Sir Graham Brady, and Sir Bob Neill

were briefed on the City Corporation's concerns over the blanket quarantine policy proposed by the Government

- Lord Berkely was briefed on the City Corporation's streetscape changes to promote walking, cycling and social distancing.
 - A briefing on the key priorities for the FPS sector was circulated to members of the House of Commons ahead of a debate on the EU's mandate for negotiating a new partnership with the UK.
 - A briefing on the post-COVID-19 economic recovery was circulated to members of the House of Lords ahead of a debate on securing a fairer, cleaner and more sustainable economy.
9. The Office submitted written evidence to three All Party Parliamentary Group inquiries: to the British Council APPG's inquiry into soft power and the integrated review, to the Digital Skills APPG inquiry into the impact of COVID-19, and the Apprenticeships APPG inquiry into the impact of the coronavirus.
 10. The City Corporation's report on trade in services with Australia was circulated to the International Trade, Economic Affairs, International Agreements, Foreign Affairs, International Relations, Treasury, and BEIS Committees, as well as to Andrew Rosindell, Chairman of the Australia and New Zealand All Party Parliamentary Group.
 11. A call between the Office and the Clerk to the International Agreements Sub-Committee has been arranged to discuss the Corporation's trade negotiation work.
 12. The Office supported the organisation of a meeting of the London All Party Parliamentary Group which discussed support for London's businesses during the pandemic. Sheriff Hayward spoke for the City Corporation.

GLA and the Devolved Institutions (Objective 6)

13. The Office arranged a meeting between the Policy Chair and Caroline Russell (Green), Chair of the Assembly's Environment Committee, to discuss the impact of COVID-19 on the City as well as a number of environmental initiatives being pursued by the City Corporation.
14. The Office arranged a meeting between the Policy Chair and Leonie Cooper (Lab), Chair of the Assembly's Economy Committee, to discuss the impact of COVID-19 on the City and the route to recovery.

Key priorities over the next month

15. Work will continue in support of the markets' relocation programme and the introduction of a private bill.
16. Submissions from the City Corporation will be drawn up for the Justice Committee's inquiry into the coroner service, the Environmental Audit Committee's inquiry into biodiversity, and the HCLG Committee's inquiry into supporting high streets after COVID-19.

17. Members of the Office will attend the (virtual) party conferences and report their findings.
18. Conversations with the SNP Westminster Office to arrange another in the series of industry roundtables are ongoing.
19. While social distancing guidelines remain in place, preventing face-to-face meetings, consideration will be given to developing a virtual engagement programme with parliamentary stakeholders.

The Parliamentary Team
City Remembrancer's Office
7 September 2020

Appendix: Parliamentary Team Objectives

1. Propose amendments or new clauses to Brexit-related legislation to reflect Corporation views and report on the progress of such legislation to Members.
2. Draft and secure the passage through Parliament of Corporation legislation, with a particular focus on securing legislation on relocating the City's markets and gaining support for the provisions included in a Private Member's Bill on air quality.
3. Make submissions to Parliamentary committee inquiries into relevant Corporation issues in collaboration with the Economic Development Office (now Innovation and Growth) and other Departments.
4. Respond to any issues or concerns raised in Parliament in either debates or tabled questions through briefing relevant MPs and Peers.
5. Enhance Parliamentary engagement through direct contact with members of both Houses on key issues and with relevant All-Party Parliamentary Groups.
6. Enhance engagement with the Greater London Assembly and the devolved institutions on matters of interest to the City through briefings and submissions to relevant inquiries.