

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUB (POLICY & RESOURCES) COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 16 September 2020

Minutes of the meeting of the Public Relations and Economic Development Sub (Policy & Resources) Committee held virtually at 3.00 pm

Present

Members:

Deputy Catherine McGuinness (Chair)	Deputy Jamie Ingham Clark
Sheriff Christopher Hayward (Deputy Chairman)	Alderman Vincent Keaveny
Deputy Keith Bottomley	Deputy Edward Lord
Tijs Broeke	Andrew Mayer
Dominic Christian	Jeremy Mayhew
Karina Dostalova	Deputy Tom Sleigh
Anne Fairweather	James Tumbridge
Alderman Prem Goyal	Alderman Sir David Wootton

Officers:

Jeremy Blackburn	- Mansion House
Sarah Bridgman	- Corporate Affairs
Peter Cannon	- Corporate Affairs
Nick Collier	- Managing Director of Brussels Office
Emma Cunningham	- Town Clerks
Paul Double	- Remembrancer
Giles French	- Innovation & Growth
Kiki Hausdorff	- Remembrancers
Sam Hutchings	- Corporate Affairs
Nigel Lefton	- Remembrancers
Emma Lloyd	- Town Clerks
Kerstin Mathias	- Innovation and Growth
Richard Messingham	- Corporate Affairs
Damian Nussbaum	- Director of Innovation and Growth
Alex Redman	- Town Clerks
Bob Roberts	- Director of Communications
Ellen Wentworth	- IT
Paul Wright	- Remembrancers

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies.

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

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED – That the public minutes and summary of the meeting held on 19 February 2020 be approved as a correct record.

4. **CHAIR'S UPDATE**

The Policy Chair gave an update to Members of the Sub-Committee on three areas:

- EU/Brexit negotiations
- COVID19 Recovery
- Virtual visit to Switzerland.

The Managing Director of the Brussels Office also gave an update on the EU engagement plan that had been coordinated with TheCityUK.

Members then asked questions about the Internal Markets Bill and whether the City of London Corporation should make a stand about the alleged breaking of international law, due to the impact it could have on London's competitiveness. Members were reminded of the motion passed at the Court of Common Council last year, which reiterated the City Corporation's position on the importance of upholding the rule of law. This message is fed into the Policy Chair's briefings and is frequently communicated. The Remembrancer also reported that the City Corporation's support for the rule of law had been made known to Members of Parliament and selected Peers in a briefing before the second reading of the Bill in the Commons.

5. **IG MONTHLY UPDATE - SEPTEMBER**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Director of Innovation and Growth giving an update of the work of that department in September.

A Member asked for further information on how to promote the cultural aspect of City Corporation work and it was agreed that attractiveness of the City was interwoven by themes such as culture and open spaces.

Another Member raised the issue of the removal of free travel for under 18s on the Transport for London (TfL) network, and due to our connections and locus with schools, whether we should take a public position on this and petition the Government. The Director of Communications advised Members that the City Corporation did have a locus in this area due to the family of schools, and that the Chair of Policy had already supported this with London Councils, who are working closely with TfL on this. The Chairman of Finance commented that any policy scheme would need a clear funding source, but it was clear that there was a political point here too as travel is an essential part of London's infrastructure.

Questions were also raised about the Waterloo and City line closure and the impact that was having on encouraging workers back into the City. The Deputy Chairman informed the Sub-Committee that he had made this point at his recent appearance in front of the London APPG.

A Member asked for more detail about the taskforce to boost socio-economic diversity at senior levels in the financial and professional services sector, and other Members requested that this work be joined up with the City's academies. Following a question, the Director of Innovation and Growth advised that the research would be launched in October 2021 and that inclusion of individuals from lower socio-economic backgrounds on the taskforce would be very important, although this would be considered after the research had been undertaken.

RESOLVED, that:-

- The report be noted.

6. **CORPORATE AFFAIRS UPDATE**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Director of Communications concerning an update on Corporate Affairs.

The Chair of Policy gave an overview of the plans for the City Corporation engaging with party conferences, which would be taking place virtually this year. Whilst Member participants would be chosen based on their skills and expertise, it was also requested that consideration be given to the political party that individual Members belong to.

RESOLVED, that:-

- The report be noted.

7. **SPORT ENGAGEMENT - PROGRESS UPDATE**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Director of Communications giving a progress update on sport engagement. The Sport Engagement Manager updated Members on the research projects being undertaken and also the planned sport related event opportunities for next year and beyond.

Members highly commended this report. One Member asked that it be looked into for the City Corporation to arrange some hospitality around the Commonwealth Games Confederation General Assembly. Members also agreed that the London Sports Awards had been a successful event with a diverse range of participants.

A Member asked for consideration to be given to recognise grassroots sport volunteers across London boroughs through the presentation of City freedoms. It was noted that the London Sport Awards could help facilitate this engagement.

RESOLVED, that:-

- The report be noted.

8. **SIX-MONTH MEDIA UPDATE**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Director of Communications giving an update on media engagement.

Members commended the Director of Communications on the hugely successful range of coverage in recent times.

A Member noted that – apart from the Policy Chair – the Chairs of our Open Spaces Committees had to front a lot of media interventions and should be praised for their hard work and dedication to them.

RESOLVED, that:-

- The report be noted.

9. PARLIAMENTARY TEAM UPDATE

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Remembrancer concerning an update on the Parliamentary Team.

RESOLVED, that:-

- The report be noted.

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

One question was raised as follows -

Engaging with activist pressure groups

A Member asked how the City Corporation engaged with activist pressure groups such as Extinction Rebellion and Black Lives Matter.

The Director of Communications advised the Sub-Committee that there should be three tests to be met before engaging with pressure groups or demonstrations:-

1. Does the City Corporation have a locus to speak on this?
2. Does the City Corporation have an established policy position, agreed by Members?
3. Is it in the interest of the City or the City Corporation to intervene? If, for example, a pressure group had accused the City Corporation of doing something wrong, we might amplify this message by engaging or responding to it.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There were no urgent items.

12. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

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 I of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

Item
13-14

Paragraph
3

13. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

The non-public minutes and summary of the meeting held on 19 February 2020 were approved.

14. **NOTE OF THE INFORMAL MEETING**

The note of the informal meeting held on 1 May 2020 was received.

15. **NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE**

One question was raised in respect of the following –

- Communication Plan of Governance Review

16. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE SUB COMMITTEE AGREES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting closed at 4.33 pm

Chair

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