

Committee(s)	Dated:
Public Relations and Economic Development Sub-Committee	17 November 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 September 2020.

The summary is written with reference to the top line Parliamentary objectives and deliverables of the Remembrancer's Office. 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 completed committee stage in the Lords. Dates for the Bill's progress in the Lords have not yet been announced. 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 - Submissions based on the City Corporation's recent visa research were made to the Government consultation and to the Commons Public Bill Committee. A submission was made during the Bill's Second Reading in the House of Lords. The Bill is currently subject to ping pong between Commons and Lords.

Financial Services Bill – The Bill's objective is to ensure that the UK's regulatory framework continues to function effectively for the UK after leaving

the EU. It received its second reading on the 9th November, at which stage the Office provided a briefing to a number of MPs setting out the City Corporation's position the Bill's provisions.

Private International Law (Implementation of Agreements) Bill – The Bill implements the 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 has passed through the Commons and is now due to return to the Lords for consideration of amendments.

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. The Bill creates discretionary powers for London's local authorities to control emissions from combustion plants where the air quality in their area exceeds World Health Organization Guidelines and they choose to declare their area an 'air quality improvement area'.
3. The Environment Bill Committee Stage proceedings, which were paused shortly after they began in March, have now resumed. Since the Environment Bill has progressed ahead of the Emissions Bill, the Office is planning to table new clauses to the former, mirroring the provisions of the latter.
4. Work continues in respect of the private bill required to enable the relocation of the Corporation's wholesale markets to the new site at Dagenham Dock. Recognising that there are a number of matters still to be resolved (such as issues relating to transport and planning) the Policy and Resources Committee decided at its meeting on 22 October 2020 to work towards depositing the bill in November 2021. The Office anticipates significant work on this project over the next year. Considerable support will continue to be given to the programme directorate in collating and building the evidence basis and support for a bill promotion.

Parliamentary and Government Inquiries (Objective 3)

5. The Office has submitted the following pieces of written evidence to Select Committees since the last report:
 - to the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee's inquiry into "Post-pandemic growth: Levelling up - local and regional structures and the delivery of economic growth". The submission highlighted the need for

growth in FPS ecosystems outside of London and the City Corporation's work to use its expertise and resources to work with other FPS centres. This supplements a previous submission made to the committee's wider inquiry into post-pandemic economic growth.

- to the Justice Committee's inquiry into the coroner service, highlighting the unique nature of the City's Coroner service and expressing support for continued local delivery of the coroner service.
- to the Housing Communities and Local Government Committee's inquiry into supporting high streets after Covid-19. The submission noted the impact of the pandemic on businesses in the City that rely on commuter footfall and highlighted the work of City Corporation bodies such as the City Business Library in offering advice and support to SMEs in the Square Mile.
- to the Housing Communities and Local Government Committee's inquiry into planning reforms. The submission underlined the importance of protecting green and open spaces. The importance of retaining local involvement in planning decisions and housing allocations was highlighted.
- to the Environmental Audit Committee's inquiry into "Greening the post-Covid recovery". The submission highlighted the Corporation's virtual engagement programme with the FPS sector throughout the crisis and noted appetite from industry for a green recovery, as well as the forthcoming Corporation-hosted Green Horizon Summit in November 2020.
- to the Lords EU International Agreements Sub-Committee on trade negotiations with Australia. The submission was made jointly with TheCityUK.
- to the Transport Committee's inquiry into the implications of coronavirus for transport. The submission discusses changes to transport patterns as a result of the coronavirus pandemic and temporary measures implemented during this period.

6. A formal written response was submitted to the Cabinet Office's Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy. The response drew on the importance of the City remaining open to international trade and emphasising its soft power. This was supplemented by a submission to the Foreign Affairs Committee's inquiry into the integrated review. The submission noted the City Corporation's role in supporting for inward visits by leading foreign political and business leaders and the role of the Lord Mayor and the Chair of Policy represent the City Corporation overseas.

7. The Office responded to a Government consultation on planning reforms, which is relevant to the City as it covers both green space protection and planning issues. The response emphasised the City's role in protecting open and green spaces across London and the Home Counties, which are important for cultural, environmental and personal-wellbeing reasons. The City's responsibilities as a planning authority for a global financial centre were highlighted and representations were made in support of retaining local planning development and the retention of the City's ability to prioritise commercial premises over residential units. The response was written in close collaboration with the Director of Open Spaces and the City Surveyor,

Responding to Issues Raised in Parliament and Enhancing Parliamentary Engagement (Objectives 4 and 5)

8. City MP Nickie Aiken was provided with a briefing ahead of her Westminster Hall debate on the contribution of cultural attractions to the local economy. The briefing highlighted the launch of the City of London Corporation's culture and commerce taskforce and other initiatives to support cultural attractions and venues. Ms Aiken noted the Barbican's Live from the Barbican services of live-streamed concerts in her speech. Ms Aiken also received briefings ahead of debates on local clean air targets and economic recovery in London
9. The Office prepared the following briefings for MPs and peers since the last report:
 - to Felicity Buchan on the City Corporation's London Recharged report, ahead of her adjournment debate on economic recovery in London.
 - to Lord Colgrain ahead of a question on the cultural and creative industries. The briefing noted the City Corporation's investment in culture as well as the launch of the City of London Corporation's culture and commerce taskforce.
 - to Paul Bristow ahead of his adjournment debate on increasing penalties for fly-tipping. The briefing noted the City Corporation's success in pursuing prosecutions for fly-tipping on City Corporation managed sites.
 - to the Bishop of London ahead of a question on the role of almshouses in the provision of housing for the elderly, noting the role of the City Corporation and livery companies in almshouse provision.
 - to the Lord Bishop of London, ahead of a question on addressing social and economic inequalities in the economic recovery from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, noting the recommendations contained in *London Recharged* to open London's opportunities to all.
 - to Sir Bob Neill on the potential impact which the United Kingdom Internal Market Bill may have on the reputation of the UK as having the highest respect for the rule of law and, in consequence, of the City of London as a global centre for legal and financial services.
 - to a number of Peers ahead of a Lords Debate on the UK's approach to negotiating the future relationship with the EU. The briefing note discussed the priorities of the FPS sector.
 - City MP Nickie Aiken was provided with a briefing on the City's work helping rough sleepers during the coronavirus pandemic ahead of a speech at an Inside Government event.
 - to Sir Bob Neil, Nickie Aiken, Pat McFadden and Bim Afolami on responses to the Chancellor's statement on the future of financial services and on second reading of the Financial Services Bill.
 - Members of the Office attended the Labour, Conservative and Liberal Democrat party conferences. Reports relating to each conference, including insights from the Corporate Affairs team, were circulated to Members of the PRED Sub-Committee and with the weekly Parliamentary Brief.

10. Sheriff Hayward spoke at a London APPG on the impact of coronavirus on businesses.
11. The Office established contact with the new APPG on Trade and Export Promotion, corresponding with the secretariat and the Chair, Viscount Waverley, who expressed a desire to engage with the City Corporation.
12. The Office held a call with the All-Party Parliamentary China Group to learn about the APPG's upcoming schedule of events.
13. A briefing on the Chancellor's statements on economic measures over the winter, and on the future of financial services was supplied to members of Policy & Resources, PRED, and Officers.

GLA and the Devolved Institutions (Objective 6)

14. The Office arranged a meeting between the Policy Chair and Leonie Cooper AM (Lab), Chair of the London Assembly's Economy Committee. The meeting followed one held in September, and provided an opportunity to update Cooper on the City Corporation's response to COVID-19, and to discuss the informal briefing due to be given by the Policy Chair to the Economy Committee.
15. The Office prepared a briefing pack for the Policy Chair's informal briefing to the London Assembly's Economy Committee on the impact of COVID-19 on the City of London. In a wide-ranging session, the Policy Chair discussed how the City had changed in the short term, how businesses were adapting to the new environment, and the challenges to be addressed in facilitating a safe return to the Square Mile. The informal session also provided an opportunity to discuss the City Corporation's contribution to the debate about the future of the capital, the London Recharged report published in September.

Key priorities over the next month

16. Work will continue in support of the markets' relocation programme and the introduction of a private bill.
17. Submissions from the City Corporation will be drawn up for the HCLG Committee's inquiry into planning, the EFRA Committee's inquiry into tree planting, the Committee on the Future Relationship with the European Union's inquiry into the ongoing negotiations, the Treasury Committee's inquiry into economic crime, and the Lords EU Services Committee inquiry into financial services after Brexit.
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, engagement with parliamentary stakeholders will remain predominantly online.

**The Parliamentary Team
City Remembrancer's Office
10 November 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.