

<b>Committee(s)</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Public Relations and Economic Development Sub-Committee	29 April 2021
<b>Subject:</b> Parliamentary Team Update	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Paul Double, City Remembrancer	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> William Stark, Parliamentary Engagement Officer	

### 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 March 2021. Given national Coronavirus restrictions, Parliament continues to sit using a mix of virtual and in-person proceedings, with much reduced physical presence at the Palace of Westminster. Westminster Hall debates and Private Members' Bill Friday sittings in the Commons and Lords have now resumed after being suspended at the start of the year.

The Commons and the Lords rose on the 25 March for the Easter Recess, with both Houses returning on the 12 April in order to pay tribute to His Royal Highness Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh.

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, which has been in Parliament for over 3 years, continues to shuttle between Commons and Lords. The House of Lords long persisted in its quest to insert a clause in the Bill to prevent or restrict trade agreements with countries found to be committing genocide. Until the middle of this month, the Government in the Commons rejected all such efforts. At the time of writing, however, a compromise appears to have been reached in which, in relation to a trade agreement and reports of genocide, a select committee will have a power to require the Government to put its position on record. Under the compromise, a select committee could insist on a parliamentary debate if it is not satisfied with the Government's response.

**Financial Services Bill** – This framework Bill is part of the package of legislation brought forward to establish the post Brexit regulatory framework for financial services. The Office has provided briefings on the Corporation's lines for peers who tabled relevant amendments to the Bill at committee stage. This follows briefings also

provided to MPs at Second Reading in the Commons and a separate briefing to Peers for the Second Reading in the Lords. The Office also facilitated the Policy Chair's oral evidence session to the Public Bill Committee.

### **Corporation legislation (Objective 2)**

2. The Emissions Reduction (Local Authorities in London) Bill, which had its First Reading in the Lords on 13 January 2020, still awaits a date for Second Reading following the disruption to parliamentary business caused 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. Following the suspension of proceedings on the Government's Environment Bill as noted in the following paragraph, preparations are being made to enable progress on the Private Members Bill in the Lords if the opportunity arises. The Bill's sponsor, Lord Tope, has agreed to reintroduce it in the next session of Parliament with a view to progressing it to second reading if this can be achieved before the Government's Environment Bill reaches that stage.
4. Consideration of the Government's Environment Bill has been postponed to the next parliamentary session, following a carry-over motion in the Commons. The delay has been attributed to pressures on the parliamentary timetable and changes to parliamentary procedure as a result of the pandemic. In liaison with London Councils, the Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee and the Chair of the Port Health and Environmental Services Committee, the Office is, as indicated above, planning to table new clauses to the Bill in the Lords, mirroring the provisions of the Emissions Reduction (Local Authorities in London) Bill if the Lords' Private Members' Bill cannot progress before the Government's measure receives second reading in the Lords.
5. Work continues on the Private Bill required to enable the relocation of the Corporation's wholesale markets to the new site at Dagenham Dock. Substantial support is being given to the programme directorate in collating and building the evidence basis and support for a Bill promotion.

### **Parliamentary and Government Inquiries (Objective 3)**

6. The Office has submitted the following pieces of written evidence to Select Committees since the last report:
  - To the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee's inquiry into moving animals across borders. The submission set out the City Corporation's duties to enforce regulations regarding the importation of animals for the Greater London Area and raised concerns traffickers exploiting a lack of checks at certain points of entry to the country, known as 'BCP (Border Control Post) shopping'
  - To the Lords International Agreements Sub Committee's inquiry into UK Accession to the CPTPP. This was an interim submission to the committee's inquiry ahead of a full response as the inquiry develops and the UK's accession to the partnership proceeds. The submission raised the UK's role in the Asia-Pacific region and highlighted the digital trade provisions that form part of the CPTPP.

7. The Office also compiled a submission to the Government's new Taskforce on Innovation, Growth and Regulatory Reform (TIGRR). The taskforce, established at the beginning of February, considers changes to regulation enabled by the UK's departure from the European Union.

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

8. The Office issued a Public Policy Bulletin to Members and Officers summarising the key announcements of the Prime Minister's statement on the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy on 16 March.
9. The Office facilitated a parliamentary event co-hosted by the City Corporation and the Industry and Parliament Trust on innovation and legal services, with particular comments on the sector's response to COVID-19. The Policy Chair and the President of the Law Society were the principal speakers. Attendees considered the challenges faced by the legal sector as a result of COVID and other topics including Lawtech, the City Corporation's proposed combined courts facility, and the need for stronger political support for the English legal system as a global commodity. Participants emphasised the importance of maintaining access to justice and concerns over the operation of the criminal justice system.
10. The Policy Chair spoke alongside Emma Harvey of the Green Finance Institute at an online roundtable with SNP MPs entitled "Civic Leadership and Green Finance in the transition to net zero", chaired by Alison Thewliss MP. The event saw discussion of the GFI's work in engaging with the private and public sectors to encourage projects such as the retrofitting of older buildings, as well as the City Corporation's Climate Action Strategy and the upcoming COP 26 summit. A further roundtable with SNP MPs is anticipated later this year.
11. The Office facilitated an oral briefing on 14 April to the members of the Lords International Agreements Committee on the City of London Corporation and EY report "The City of London: An ecosystem enabling international trade".
12. The Office prepared other briefings for MPs and peers since the last report:
  - Lord Black of Brentwood was provided with a briefing, incorporating the views of the Barbican Centre and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, ahead of his question in the Lords on EU visas and work permits for music and performing arts students.
  - A briefing was provided to Baroness Coussins ahead of her question on the engaging with Latin American countries as part of the UK's foreign policy.
  - Members of the Education Select Committee were provided with a briefing ahead of a Westminster Hall debate on the Committee's report on a plan for an adult skills and lifelong learning revolution. The briefing set out City Corporation views on skills in the FPS sector.
13. The Office has arranged private briefing on 27 April for Craig Tracey MP, Chair of the APPG Insurance and Financial Services on the IRSG report "How the trend towards data localisation is impacting the financial services sector".
14. Members of the Parliamentary Team held an introductory meeting with the office of Shaun Bailey, MP for West Bromwich West. Mr Bailey's staff were introduced to the work of the City of London Corporation and the Remembrancer's Office and discussed potential future engagement.

15. The Office contacted the APPG on Hospitality and Tourism in advance of an upcoming APPG inquiry into the hospitality and tourism sectors. Contact was also made with the APPG Performing Arts Education and Training, noting the City Corporation's provision of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and the Barbican Centre.
16. The Office is in discussion, alongside IG colleagues, with the APPG Financial Markets and Services regarding an event on the UK-US relationship following the Policy Chair's virtual visit to the US in May. The Policy Chair will speak alongside APPG Chair Bim Afolami MP.
17. Following discussion by Members at the Policy and Resources Committee, the Office provided City MP Nickie Aiken with information about the City's approach to homelessness and rough sleeping ahead of her Westminster Hall debate on the repeal and replacement of the Vagrancy Act 1824.
18. The Office provided assessments of Lord Hill of Oareford's UK Listings review to City MP Nickie Aiken. An appraisal of Ron Kalifa's review of Fintech, to which the City Corporation provided the secretariat alongside Innovate Finance, was also given to her office.
19. Ms Aiken's office were also updated on the City Corporation's COVID Business Recovery Fund and plans for a Recovery Promotional Campaign for the City.
20. Ms Aiken also tabled a written parliamentary question on the Planning White Paper, following suggestions from the Office regarding City Corporation concerns about future protection for Metropolitan Open Land.

#### **GLA and the Devolved Institutions (Objective 6)**

21. The Office arranged a meeting between Assembly Member Nicky Gavron (Lab), a member of the Assembly's Environment Committee, and officers from the Department of the Built Environment to brief her, at her request, on the City Corporation's recycling and waste policies.
22. The London Assembly rose on the 19 March and is not due to sit again until after the elections on 6 May. The Scottish and Welsh Parliaments were recalled on 12 April in order to pay tribute to His Royal Highness Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh but will not sit again before the 6 May elections.

#### **Key priorities over the next month**

23. The Office will issue a Public Policy Bulletin to Members and Officers summarising the key announcements of the Queen's Speech, due to take place on the 11 May. A report on the Queen's Speech will be tabled at the next meeting of this Sub Committee.
24. Submissions from the City Corporation will be drawn up for Environmental Audit Committee's inquiry into the sustainability of the built environment, the Lords Youth Unemployment Committee's inquiry into jobs for young people, the DCMS committee's inquiry into major sporting and cultural events, the Treasury Committee's inquiry into jobs, growth and productivity after coronavirus, and the HCLG Committee's inquiries into permitted development rights, and local authorities and the road to net zero.

25. Very substantial amounts of work continue in relation to the wholesale markets co-location project. Team members are working very closely with officers from across the Corporation on the scope of the Bill, the interaction with existing market arrangements, the requirements of the future market, the relationship with key politicians at a local, regional and national level, and on communications and engagement.
26. The Office will closely follow reports regarding the outcome of the UK's application to join the Lugano Convention and will provide support on this and other rule of law issues relevant to the City in liaison with the International Law Committee and the related professional bodies.

**The Parliamentary Team**  
**City Remembrancer's Office**  
**29 April 2021**

## **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.