

Committee(s): Culture, Heritage and Libraries – For Decision	Dated: 19 th July 2021
Subject: Printed Version of the City of London Corporation Pocket Book	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	Outcomes 9 and 11 of the Corporate Plan
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	Town Clerk's local risk budget
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Town Clerk	For Decision
Report author: Douglas Trainer, Deputy Town Clerk and Chief Executive	

Summary

1. Under its Terms of Reference, the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee has responsibility for the City of London Corporation Pocket Book, the production of which, is reviewed periodically. The Pocket Book contains, amongst other things, details of all Members and their Wards, details of the Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Sheriffs (past and present) and a diary which includes a calendar of service committee meetings. Currently, it is circulated to elected Members, Chief Officers, co-opted and external Members, resident judges, Honorary Ward Clerks, Livery Company Clerks as well as other few ad hoc outside bodies. Since 2015, Members have received both electronic and printed versions of the Book.
2. The format of the Pocket Book was last assessed in 2018. At that time the Committee asked for the next review to be undertaken after the all-out Court of Common Council Elections in 2021. Whilst the date of the Election has been changed subsequently to March 2022 as a result of the COVID19 pandemic, officers took the view that the assessment should proceed in 2021 as planned. A review has now been undertaken and the outcome is now presented to the Committee for consideration ahead of the production of this year's book which is due to start during the summer recess.
3. Last year a decision was taken to reduce the number of printed copies from 550 to 100 copies, with just 40 Members requesting hard copies and the remaining recipients receiving an electronic version only. No adverse comments were received from Members or others. As part of the preparations for this year, Members have been canvassed regarding their preferred choice of format for receipt of the Pocket Book and again 40 Members have requested the usual bound and printed version.
4. The last full print of 550 copies was undertaken in 2019 at a print cost of approximately £4,820. The 100 copies printed in 2020 were produced at a cost of the cost of

approximately £3,930. The print unit cost per book has therefore risen from £8.76 per Book to £39. It should be noted that most of the printing cost associated with the production of the Book is attributable to typesetting, other formatting requirements and binding rather than the actual printing of the book, which is why there is little difference between the two costs.

5. Detailed consideration has been given to whether, in the currently climate, continuing to produce the Pocket Book is efficient and represents value for money. Departments are required to make 12% efficiency savings on their local risk budgets. They have also been asked to review their services as part of the design principles of the Target Operating Model with a view to transforming services to ensure that they are more responsive, proactive and efficient.
6. Having taken into account the fact that the Pocket Book is available electronically the production of which is less labour intensive and more efficient; the reduced number of Members now wishing to receive bound copies and the impact this has on the unit cost of producing each Book; the impact on staff resources in terms of the time required to proof read the documentation supplied by the print contractor and the environmental impact of producing a printed version of the diary, officers are of the view that the provision of bound copies should now cease. Members and other named recipients should now be provided with an electronic version of the diary only, with updates being undertaken and shared with Members on a more regular basis, possibly monthly or such other frequency as determined by the Committee.

Recommendation(s)

7. For the reasons set out above, Members are asked to agree that the printed and bound version of the City of London Corporation Pocket Book should now cease and that going forward, Members and other recipients should be provided with more accurate information via an electronic version of the diary only, with updates being undertaken on a monthly basis or other frequency determined by the Committee.

Main Report

Background

8. Since 2015 Members have received both an electronic and printed version of the City of London Corporation Pocket Book. Amongst other things, both the printed and electronic Pocket Books contain the following:-
 - Details of all Members and their Wards
 - A list of Members in order of seniority
 - Details of the Lord Mayor Aldermen and Sheriffs (past and present),
 - A diary of committee meetings
 - A list of past Chief Commoners
 - A list of all Livery Companies, including a map of Livery Company Halls and the names of details of their Clerks
 - A map of the London Underground

- The contact details of various City Corporation offices such as, the Barbican Centre, Estate Office and Art Gallery, the Central Criminal Court and the Coroner's Court and Office.
9. Currently, the diary is circulated to elected Members, Chief Officers, co-opted and external Members, resident judges, Honorary Ward Clerks, Livery Company Clerks as well as other few ad hoc outside bodies.
 10. The content, format and production of the Pocket Book is reviewed periodically and was last assessed in 2018. At that time the Committee asked for the next review to be undertaken after the all-out Court of Common Council Elections in 2021. It was also agreed that as part of the process the views of all Members should be sought on whether they wished to continue to receive a bound copy of the Pocket Book.
 11. In order to mitigate the impact of COVID19 pandemic, the date of the Ward Elections was subsequently changed to March 2022. Notwithstanding this, officers took the view that the assessment should proceed in 2021 as planned. A review has now been undertaken and the outcome is now presented to the Committee for consideration ahead of the production of this year's book
 12. It should be noted that for reasons of efficiency a decision was taken by the General Purposes Committee of the Court of Aldermen in 2015 to cease production of its Pocket Book.
 13. A decision was taken last year to reduce the number of copies printed in 2019 i.e. from 550 at a cost of approximately £5,000 to 100 copies in 2020 at a cost of approximately £4,000 including posting the diary to recipients. Like this year, just 40 Members requested bound copies in 2020, with all the remaining recipients receiving an electronic version only. No adverse comments were received. It should be noted that a large part of the expense during production is the setup cost for printing and binding which remains the same, regardless of the reduction in the number of copies printed. The print cost also includes a licensing fee, approximately £800, for the reproduction of the map of the London Underground.
 14. This year the estimated cost of reverting to the production of the pre-pandemic numbers of the Pocket Book is likely to be similar to that of 2019. A more accurate estimate will be reported verbally at the meeting.

Proposal

15. Detailed consideration has been given to whether the Book should continue to be printed in hard copy, particularly at a time of heightened financial constraints and departments are required to make 12% efficiency savings on their local risk budgets. As part of the design principles of the Target Operating Model (TOM), departments have also been asked to review their services with a view to transforming them to ensure that they represent value for money, are more responsive, proactive and efficient.
16. The Pocket Book is available electronically. It is easy to amend in the format and is much less labour intensive to produce. It has the capacity to contain more information

such as links to other data and websites which Members may find useful. Even if the number of bound copies is decreased, the reduced number of Members now wishing to receive bound copies of the Book inevitably increases the unit cost of its production. As part of the City Corporation's climate action aspirations agreed by Members, departments are also required to bear in mind the impact of its services on the environment for example, the unnecessary use of paper, transportation from Manchester, postage. Officers are therefore of the view that the provision of bound copies should now cease and that Members and other named recipients of the Pocket Book should now be provided with an electronic version of the diary only, with updates being undertaken and shared with Members on a more regular basis, possibly monthly or other frequency as determined by the Committee.

17. It is now possible to offer a more modern and environmentally friendly version of the Pocket Book where information can be updated electronically in a timely manner. For example, the Member updates that will be required following the outcome of the 2022 Ward elections and the possible changes to the Committee structure and meeting dates that are likely to follow the outcome of the Governance Review. This information would remain outdated in the bound book for several months.
18. The availability of the new modern.gov app which has been installed on the various devices used by Members should make accessing the Pocket Book much easier.

Strategic, Financial and Other Implications

19. This proposal will help meet the aspiration in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan for shaping outstanding environments by ensuring that the organisation is digitally and physically well-connected and responsive.
20. Moving to a solely electronic version of the Pocket Book will achieve a small saving and it will also release staff resources to progress the outcomes of the governance and the TOM.
20. Whilst the proposals included in this paper do not carry any major implications for the Climate Action programme, ceasing production will assist in decreasing the City Corporation's footprint in delivering this service and go some way towards the our ambitions to reduce the amount of paper we use or going paperless.
21. Under the Equality Act 2010, all public bodies have a duty to ensure that when exercising their functions they have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and to take steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people. The current format of the Pocket Book (which is small) does not conform to current guidance on the use of fonts which states that typeface should be visibly accessible and clear and easy to read particularly for those falling within the age and disability protected characteristic. The Book is therefore in breach of this duty.

Conclusion

22. The format of the Pocket Book was last assessed in 2018. A review has now been undertaken in accordance with the Committee's request for a review to take place in 2021. Having considered the advantages of producing an electronic version of the Pocket Book only as referred to above, officers are of the view that the provision of bound copies of the diary should now cease. Members and other named recipients should now be provided with the electronic version only, which will enable updates to be made and shared with Members on a more regular basis. The Committee's view is now sought on the proposal ahead of the production of this year's book which is due to start during the summer recess.

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