

Committee(s)	Dated:
Finance Committee	12 October 2021
Subject: Report of the Work of the Sub-Committee(s)	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	N/A
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	Y/N
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Town Clerk	For Information
Report author: John Cater, Committee Clerk, Finance Committee	

Summary

On 19 July 2016, the Finance Committee agreed that, in addition to draft minutes of Sub-Committee meetings, short reports be provided to advise the Committee of the main issues considered by the Sub-Committees at recent meetings. This report sets out some of the main public issues considered by the following Sub Committees since 21st September 2021:

Finance Grants Oversight and Performance Sub-Committee – 21st September 2021

Central Grants Unit – Update Report

Members received a report of the Managing Director of BHE and Chief Charities Officer providing an update on the work of the Central Grants Unit (CGU).

The Head of CGU reported that CGU had, in the first quarter of the year, overseen grant-making of around £2 million, and it is expected that this could reach £5 million by the end of the financial year. The expansion in funding is partly due to the success generated by imbedding the CIL Neighbourhood Fund. The Resource Allocation Sub-Committee has agreed a pause to larger applications to the Fund. This is to allow applications to the Fund to continue for a number of years to come. A new timetable for grant-making will be brought to Policy and Resources at the beginning of next year. Members were advised that, while the £5m figure would be a one-off due to the distribution of the CIL Fund, the release of funds from the Charity Review would allow grant-making to continue while the CIL was drawn down.

The Head of CGU also reported on the work CGU had done relating to the International Disaster Fund. The Unit continued to work with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Finance Committee to ensure that they can respond to international incidents. Members agreed that it would be useful to have some further information on how the International Disaster Fund can be improved.

Corporate Asset Sub-Committee – 30th September 2021

2021 / 22 Energy Performance Q1 Update

The Sub-committee received a report presenting 2021/22 Quarter 1 energy performance for City Corporation operational sites.

It was highlighted to Members how the report presented energy performance seen over the last quarter, with a 16% reduction seen against the previous 12 months as a result of multiple factors. Members noted how the paper brought forward a new recommendation that Corporate Property Group energy targets align to the City Corporation's Climate Action Strategy. It was confirmed that good progress was being made towards completion of the PSDS Projects.

It was further explained that the City Corporation had mobilised surveys at the City Corporation's top 15 sites and these were underway and would look to deliver recommendations in Quarter 4. The Centre for Excellence bid for resources in support of the Climate Action Strategy went out last month, but this had received a nil return in the first pass and there was now an ongoing negotiation for a variation bid from two of the bidders. Members noted that a Sustainability Consultant had been brought in to provide an extra layer of assurance and support in managing delivery of Climate Action Strategy projects this autumn.

Members were offered an update on the current energy market and the City Corporation's solution in responding to this. Members noted how the City Corporation had moved to a purchasing in advance strategy, which had allowed for hedging of buying electricity and gas over the last six months and the City Corporation achieving a rate that compares favourably to the current market conditions. The City Corporation was able to mitigate against the large increases seen in energy prices over the last twelve months. The City Corporation's current contract would go through until September 2022, with consideration already underway through a Procurement Partner to identify a good point in the market to start beginning procurement for the twelve months after that.

A Member questioned what confidence officers had in current contract partners in surviving the current turmoil in the energy market. It was explained how the City Corporation's current power and gas supplier was relatively well protected from impacts on domestic supply, with it only supplying commercially and not being impacted by domestic price caps. The supplier was heavily involved in power generation to help with its margins and was also a worldwide organisation with over 130,000 employees, with the smaller domestic suppliers being impacted by the current turmoil in the market.

RESOLVED: That Members: -

- Note new carbon and energy targets for the Corporate Property Group (CPG), derived from the Climate Action Strategy Targets.
- Note the progress of £9.4m from BEIS Grant, covering 100% of capital investment needed for the PSDS project.

- Note good progress towards the completion of PSDS projects.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the report.

John Cater

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