

Committee(s): Public Relations Sub Committee	Dated: 18/10/2021
Subject: Corporate Affairs Update	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	Corporate Plan outcomes 2-10
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
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: Bob Roberts, Director of Communications	For Information
Report author: Matthew Baird – Senior Corporate Affairs Officer	

Summary

The below report provides a summary of the work of the Corporate Affairs Team, since the last meeting of the Public Relations Sub Committee on 29 April 2021.

The Corporate Affairs Team's work is guided by the Corporate Plan 2018 – 2023, the updated Lord Mayor's Theme, the Policy Chair's Policy statements to the Court of Common Council, as well as the Policy Chair's priorities.

Priorities in the period since the last Sub Committee meeting have been dominated by the continuing support given to efforts to recover from the pandemic, chiefly by ensuring stakeholders are regularly briefed on the City Corporation's Recovery Taskforce report *The Square Mile: Future City*.

We have also prioritised supporting the Climate Action Strategy, engagement on the major projects and engaging with stakeholders on the importance of FPS.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Recovery

1. To support the ongoing recovery from the pandemic, the Corporate Affairs Teams have been:

- a. Continuing to engage with political stakeholders and others to highlight the publication of the City Corporation's Recovery Taskforce report *The Square Mile: Future City*.
- b. Ensuring that the Policy Chair and Lord Mayor are briefed for regular pan-London COVID meetings, such as the London Leader's COVID Committee on how the City is being impacted by the pandemic and is recovering from it.
- c. Scoping intelligence for the support of the Policy Chair in her regular meetings of London bodies - London Councils, Central London Forward and London and Partners.
- d. Pushing relevant updated messaging through speeches at high level events.
- e. Continuing to support the Policy Chair in her membership of the London COVID Business Forum and the London Recovery Board through briefing and clarifying messaging.

Climate Action

2. The Corporate Affairs Team has been supporting the Climate Action Strategy by:
 - a. Briefing the Policy Chair, and other senior members, to promote the pan-London work of the Corporation on climate action and the City Corporation's Climate Action Strategy.
 - b. Continuing to provide input to the City Corporation's involvement in the Core Cities Commission in the run up to COP26. This supports our wider engagement work with our UK national and regional strategic partners.
 - c. Delivering a successful roundtable on Green Recovery in partnership with the Institute for Government and a public panel session on the same subject.
 - d. Engaging with the IPPR Environmental Justice Commission and influencing the Commission's final policy recommendations, now completed.
3. The Corporate Affairs Team will continue to work with officers across the organisation to ensure we engage with key political stakeholders in the run up to COP26, and throughout the UK's presidency of the Conference.

Major Projects

To support the major projects programme, we have:

4. Hosted Nickie Aiken MP at Smithfield and Salisbury Square sites (as part of a visit to the City Corporation) in conjunction with Committee Chairs. Ms Aiken was provided with a face to face briefing on developments.
5. Continued engagement with Borough Leader stakeholders and securing several letters of support from Borough Leaders for the Markets project.

6. Liaised with the GLA and Deputy Mayors, ensuring that they are fully briefed and engaged with the City Corporation's work.

Other work areas we have been involved in are:

Competitiveness

7. The Corporate Plan commits the City Corporation to ensuring that we are a global hub for innovation in financial and professional services, commerce and culture as well as having the world's best legal and regulatory framework and access to global markets.
8. To support this work, the Corporate Affairs Team has continued to focus on building and strengthening relationships with influential politicians and policymakers who are well placed to maintain and enhance the competitiveness of London and the City. This has included:
 - a. Briefing the Policy Chair for a roundtable led by the Department for International Trade on the Professional Qualifications Bill announced in the Queen's Speech.
 - b. Organising an event with the Parliamentary Labour Party Backbench Treasury Committee to discuss financial services and leaving the European Union.
 - c. Providing briefing and support for the regular meeting between the Lord Mayor and Policy Chair and the Investment Minister Lord Grimstone on issues relating to his departmental roles in both the Department for International Trade and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.
 - d. Writing speeches for the Policy Chair on the importance of innovation and tech, including for Fintech Week 2021, the Westminster Business Forum and London International Disputes Week.
 - e. Working with colleagues in Innovation and Growth to develop the political engagement strand of the forthcoming competitiveness strategy.
 - f. Supporting the Policy Chair and Police Authority Board Chair in their engagement with government for new technology safeguards to prevent online scams, as part of a wider commitment to promote the competitive strengths of the City of London.
 - g. Drafting the City Corporation's submission to the upcoming Comprehensive Spending Review, ensuring HM Treasury are sighted on our key strategic priorities to support a competitive City.

Levelling up

9. Levelling up is one of the major priorities of the Government. The Corporate Affairs Team continues to engage with the relevant stakeholders to ensure that the City Corporation's views on this key Government priority are taken into account in the policy making process.

Work to achieve this has included:

- a. Highlighting the work of financial and professional services and the benefits that the sector brings to the regions through jobs and growth.
- b. Working with the Finance for Sustainable Growth project, connected Greentech businesses in the North East to investment opportunities.
- c. Engaging closely on socio-economic diversity, including the Government commissioned taskforce the City Corporation is leading.
- d. Highlighting that levelling up within regions is important, and that London has areas that are also in need of levelling up.
- e. Engaging with Levelling Up Advisor to the Government, Neil O'Brien MP, ahead of the publication of the Levelling Up White Paper this autumn.

Online Safety Bill

On the Online Safety Bill, we have been:

10. Working with Remembrancer Team colleagues on pre legislative framework for the Bill to:
 - a. Bring attention to the prominence of fraud within the Bill.
 - b. Engage with a wide array of political stakeholders to press for more inclusion of fraud and associated provisions within the Bill.

London partnerships

On our partnerships in London, we have been:

11. Working closely with the City's political stakeholders Nickie Aiken MP and Unmesh Desai AM.
12. Continuing to maintain and support the Policy Chair's pan London political engagement with Borough Leaders and Deputy Mayors of London.
13. Working closely with London specific think thanks and trade bodies, such as Centre for London and Central London Forward.
14. Instigating an updated engagement programme for the Policy Chair to further develop relations with Central Activity Zone leaders.
15. Providing support to the City Corporation's Statue Working Group through managing a consultative exercise with key City Corporation stakeholders on the future of two items of contested heritage within the Guildhall estate.

Regional engagement

16. On regional engagement, the Corporate Affairs Team have:

- a. Supported and advised on engagement and messaging with political stakeholders in Northern Ireland, working closely with IG (Regions Team), including meetings with the Mayor of Derry, hosting a NI reception and preparing for the Policy Chair's upcoming trip to Northern Ireland.
- b. Worked with colleagues in Innovation and Growth to support a regional engagement programme in Scotland and Wales.

Key Data

None

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Strategic implications

17. We engage with political stakeholders, organise events associated with the party-political conferences and work with the thinktanks and other third-party organisations to produce events and associated policy reports. This provides an opportunity for the City Corporation to engage with key audiences on important global, national and local government issues and to demonstrate the Corporation's involvement in relevant debates. Sponsorship and political engagement would also help deliver outcomes 2 – 10 of the 2018-23 Corporate Plan.

Financial implications

18. The Corporate Affairs Team has an established budget for all party conference and engagement related activity. Any sponsorship of ad-hoc policy projects is currently funded via the Policy Initiatives Fund according to decisions of the Policy and Resources Committee.

Resource implications

None

Legal implications

None

Risk implications

None

Equalities implications

None

Climate implications

None

Security implications

None

Conclusion

19. Members are asked to note the ongoing work of the Corporate Affairs Team.

Appendices

None

Background Papers

None

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