

Committee(s): Public Relations Sub (Policy & Resources) Committee	Dated: 24 January 2022
Subject: Media Update	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	[1-12]
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	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: Bob Roberts, Director of Communications	For Information
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Summary

This report summarises the media output from the City of London Corporation's Media Team between October 2021 and January 2022.

It gives a quantitative analysis of our print, broadcast and digital reach.

It then gives details of the subjects which generated significant media coverage about the City Corporation and the Square Mile and a qualitative analysis on whether the tone and content has been mainly positive, negative or neutral.

Unsurprisingly, most coverage focused on the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the negative impact of the Plan B restrictions and working from home guidance on Square Mile businesses that rely on footfall.

The Policy Chair's letter to the Chancellor calling for business support pre-empted the Chancellor announcing a £1bn package and positioned us as proactively and urgently responding to the fresh restrictions.

There was also extensive and largely positive coverage of the new Lord Mayor taking office, the Lord Mayor's Show, COP26, the Barbican External Review and accolades for our Open Spaces.

Details are below.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

Main Report

Quantitative Analysis

1. The Weekly Media Summary produced every Friday measures and records the main print, broadcast and digital media output of the Media Team. It is distributed to Members and senior officers.
2. This report collates and summarises the findings of the Weekly Media Summary from mid-October 2021 and early January 2022.

Print

3. There have been more than 262 articles relating to the City of London Corporation in national, regional and local newspapers.
4. Advertising Value Equivalent (equivalent if we paid for coverage) is £2,606,785 (this excludes radio, TV broadcasting and international print coverage). By comparison, the AVE for the six-month period between April and October 2021 was £6,259,183.
5. Additionally, there have been at least 85 articles in international media which are not collated by the cuttings agency and which are not included in the AVE figure.

Broadcast

6. There have been at least 34 pieces of broadcast media coverage achieved including The Today Programme, BBC London News, Bloomberg Radio, CNBC and Sky News.

Digital

7. The corporate Twitter feed now has 55,800 followers - up by 2,000 since the last report. For comparison Westminster Council now has 24,900 followers.
8. Our corporate Facebook page has 11,214 followers slightly up from 11,147. Westminster Council now has 5,855.
9. Our corporate LinkedIn page now has 29,017 followers, up by 1,869 followers. This is more followers than any London borough.
10. Our paid for COVID-19 booster campaign – based on and to promote the official NHS booster campaign – has, at time of writing, reached 9,994 users on LinkedIn and 405,440 on Facebook.
11. The most visited page on the corporate website between October 2021 and January 2022 was the COVID-19 testing information page with 77,621 views.

12. Our website climbed the Q4 Sitemorse UK Local Government Index to 25th place, up 65 places. The index covers a range of issues including accessibility, search engine optimisation, email links, code quality and performance.

Subject Details and Qualitative Analysis of Media Coverage

COVID-19

- a. The majority of coverage on COVID-19 focused on speculation about fresh restrictions amid rising cases and the Omicron variant, which culminated in the introduction of the Government's 'Plan B' in December.
- b. The Policy Chair's response to these 'Plan B' restrictions appeared on the front page of the Financial Times. Further coverage included Reuters, Sky News, Daily Mail, Yahoo News, City Matters and 180 other media outlets. She was interviewed on BBC Radio 4's Today programme about her call for Government support for Square Mile SMEs in a letter sent to the Chancellor. This was also covered by the Financial Times, Daily Mail and City A.M.
- c. The Policy Chair was interviewed by BBC London Radio in a 40-minute interview on new COVID restrictions as well as other topics including TfL funding, COP26 and Brexit.
- d. The Policy Chair wrote in City A.M. calling on City workers and residents to get their COVID and flu jabs. She also wrote in City Matters urging uptake of vaccinations, tests and face masks to help keep the economy going.
- e. The Lord Mayor, Lady Mayoress and the Policy Chair were featured in City Matters after they visited the Square Mile's dedicated vaccination centre to encourage Londoners to get their COVID-19 first, second, booster and flu jabs.
- f. City Matters and London Post reported that two pop-up COVID vaccination sites would be installed at Mansion House before Christmas.

Qualitative Analysis:

- a. The tone of media coverage was largely negative, reflecting the economic impact that work from home guidance will have on Square Mile businesses reliant on footfall. The Policy Chair's call on the Chancellor to help these businesses pre-empted him announcing a £1bn support package and positioned the organisation as proactively and urgently responding to the fresh restrictions.
- b. Public health messaging around vaccination and testing has been prioritised in light of the Omicron variant. These communications have sought to drive uptake across the community in line with the City Corporation's legal duty as a

category one responder to warn and inform the public under the Civil Contingencies Act. Tone and content was largely neutral.

Square Smile campaign

- a. The Evening Standard reported on the launch of the City Corporation's Square Smile campaign designed to encourage and welcome back workers to the City. The campaign was also covered by the Daily Mail, Scottish Daily Mail and MSN, while the Lord Mayor wrote a City A.M. column focusing on it.
- b. The Lord Mayor and Policy Chair were mentioned in a City A.M. report on the Square Smile campaign and the new roundel at Bank Station, to welcome workers and visitors back to the City.
- c. The campaign also used paid media advertising and worked with social media influencers to reach targeted worker audiences.
- d. In line with Government restrictions, the Square Smile campaign was paused on 10 December 2021.

Qualitative Analysis

- a. Coverage was entirely positive, which helped to support a 27% increase in Square Mile footfall in the period between the campaign launching in October and being paused last month following the Plan B restrictions being introduced.
- b. Media interest following the launch was limited due to the lack of new announcements as part of the campaign.

COP26

- a. The Green Horizon Summit – organised by the City Corporation and Green Finance Institute – was widely referenced in print, broadcast and online coverage of the financial sector's initiatives at COP26.
- b. Late Lord Mayor William Russell's keynote speech at the Green Horizon Summit was covered by City A.M., Evening Standard and Yahoo News. He also appeared on a live panel on CNBC while his City A.M. column on climate action was retweeted by the Mayor of London.
- c. The Policy Chair was interviewed by BBC World Service in Glasgow while her response to the Chancellor's speech was covered by Reuters, City A.M. and the Daily Mail. Her tweet welcoming the speech was retweeted by the Chancellor. The Policy Chair was also quoted on a front-page Evening Standard story about City bonuses for senior executives being linked to hitting

'green targets'. City A.M., London Loves Business and Relocate Magazine also ran stories quoting her.

- d. Prior to COP26, the City Corporation's announcement of a new 2040 net zero target for its combined investment portfolios was covered by Bloomberg, Yahoo News, London Loves Business, Washington Examiner and City Matters.

Qualitative Analysis

- a. Coverage was positive in an exceptionally crowded space given the number of announcements and initiatives by others at COP26. However, some reports focused on the role of City firms in financing fossil fuels following protests by Extinction Rebellion.

New Lord Mayor

- a. Lord Mayor Vincent Keaveny was interviewed live on the BBC Radio 4 Today programme about workers returning to the City, the UK's relationship with the EU and the Lord Mayor's Show. Further interviews with BBC London TV, Bloomberg Radio and BBC Good Morning Ulster reached wide audiences.
- b. A page lead in The Times featured a profile interview with the Lord Mayor. He highlighted his ambition to improve diversity across the City. He was also featured in The Irish Times, the Irish Post and Belfast Telegraph. City A.M., Sunday Mirror, City Matters, Irish Sun, Irish Central, The Guardian, Daily Mail, Bloomberg Radio and Irish Post. The Lord Mayor's first column for City A.M. argued that social mobility should be top of every boardroom agenda and set out his mayoral theme.
- c. The Lord Mayor's Banquet at Guildhall generated extensive media coverage – with over 1,000 online news, broadcast, and print stories. The coverage included Boris Johnson's keynote speech, which was featured in the Financial Times' 'Week Ahead' column, City A.M., Daily Express, The Daily Telegraph, Financial Times, Daily Mail, Inews, Independent, Reuters and the Guardian. The Lord Mayor's speech and his focus on the social component of ESG was reported by City A.M. and The Daily Telegraph.

Qualitative Analysis

- a. Very positive coverage with the Lord Mayor setting out his theme to a wide range of audiences, with a particular focus on efforts to improve diversity across the City.

Lord Mayor's Show

- a. The Lord Mayor's Show generated extensive media coverage - a total of 1,400 online news, broadcast, and print stories. Reports included a live interview by the BBC1 Lord Mayor's Show TV broadcast of an Extinction Rebellion protester, who criticised the Lord Mayor and the City of London. The broadcast had a peak audience of over one million. Further coverage in BBC Online, Metro, Independent Evening Standard, RTE, The Guardian, City Matters, Daily Mail, Observer, LBC and Sky News. Lord Mayor's Show Pageantmaster, Dominic Reid, was interviewed for ITV's London Tonight.
- b. Ahead of the Show, The Times featured an image of Lord Mayor Elect Vincent Keaveny in the State Coach during rehearsals for the Lord Mayor's Show, with further coverage in ITV's Good Morning Britain including an interview with Pageantmaster Dominic Reid. Further coverage in Time Out, Radio Times, City Matters and Londonist.

Qualitative Analysis

- a. Media coverage on the day was mixed, with some negative, and dominated by the Extinction Rebellion protest and their criticism of City firms for investing in fossil fuels. Coverage in the lead up to the Show was positive and factual in tone.

Planning and Transportation

- a. The City Corporation was referenced in coverage of the Secretary of State's decision to reject plans for the 'Tulip' tower in The Daily Telegraph, The Guardian, Mail Online, the Financial Times, Bloomberg, BBC News, BBC Radio Shropshire, Yahoo, ITV, Evening Standard, The AJ, City A.M., New Civil Engineer, PBC Today, Financial News, Building, Architect News, Construction News, Building Design, The Construction Index, Construction Enquirer and over ten other online publications.
- b. The Evening Standard, City Matters, Yahoo News, Building Design and at least ten further media outlets in the UK and internationally reported on the 70% year-on-year increase in office floorspace approved within new City developments in 2021. Chair of the Planning and Transportation Committee, Alastair Moss, was quoted.
- c. Coverage of the decision to approve plans to redevelop the former Daily Express building appeared in City Matters, Londonist, Architects' Journal, Property Week, Salesground, MyLondon, Construction Enquirer, Arch20, PBC Today, and e-achitect.
- d. The City Corporation featured in City A.M. following approval for a new 24-storey office tower on Houndsditch in the Eastern Cluster. It was the Square Mile's seventh tall building to be approved in 2021. The story also featured in Relationship Science, OnLondon, Architects' Journal and Pro Landscaper.

- e. Coverage of the decision by the Planning and Transportation Committee to reject planning application for Custom House hotel development appeared in Building Design, Salesground and Building. Planning and Transportation Committee Chair Alastair Moss was quoted in The Times T2 section.
- f. Former Lord Mayor William Russell was quoted in City A.M. on the return of the Waterloo and City line to a full weekday service in November. Policy Chair Catherine McGuinness was quoted in Ian Visits, UK Today News, Evening Standard, City Matters, MSN, London News Today, and Rail UK. The service has subsequently been suspended again due to COVID related staff shortages.

Qualitative Analysis

- a. The Secretary of State's decision to reject plans for the "Tulip" tower generated widespread international coverage that referenced criticism of the scheme from the Mayor of London for it being "poorly designed".
- b. Recent figures setting out the year-on-year increase in office floorspace approved helped to show the resilience of the Square Mile office market, underlining continuing confidence from developers and investors.

Guildhall statues with links to slavery

- a. Widespread coverage of the decision at Court of Common Council to retain and contextualise statues of two figures linked to slavery – including in ITV London, The Times, Daily Express, BBC News, City AM, City Matters, Bloomberg, Reuters and Russia Today. AFP copy appeared in numerous international media including Jakarta Post and Breitbart. Statues Working Group Chair Doug Barrow was quoted in most stories. Earlier in the week, Evening Standard, BBC London News and Reuters reported on the recommendation ahead of the Court of Common Council meeting.

Qualitative Analysis

- a. Coverage was mainly factual. But a number of media outlets reported the City Corporation's commitment to host educational and cultural events that address the context of the statues and the contemporary issues they raise.

Barbican External Review

- a. The Guardian reported that the City of London Corporation has committed to "a radical transformation of culture and behaviours" at the Barbican Centre. This followed publication of an External Review into experiences of discrimination at the arts centre, an HR audit of the institution and an Action Plan in response. Chair of the Barbican Centre Board, Tom Sleight, was

quoted. Further coverage included in Evening Standard, The Times, The Daily Telegraph, City Matters, Arts Professional and The Stage. Also in over 150 UK local online articles via Press Association.

Qualitative Analysis

- a. The majority of coverage was negative in tone, but carried key messaging with reports stating the Barbican centre is taking “decisive action” to combat discrimination and has committed to “a radical transformation of culture and behaviours”.

Open Spaces

- a. The City Corporation was referenced in an extended feature in the Financial Times on the joys of Hampstead Heath, marking the 150th anniversary of the Hampstead Heath Act.
- b. City Matters led coverage of the City of London Corporation winning 15 Green Flag awards and winning Gold in the Town Category of London in Bloom. Open Spaces Committee Chairman, Oliver Sells QC, was quoted. The Epping Forest Guardian ran a story on Epping Forest winning a Green Flag and Epping Forest and Commons Committee Chairman, Graeme Doshi-Smith, was quoted. Inside Croydon reported that the City Commons had won several Green Flag awards. Further coverage in Bucks Free Press, Slough Express, Maidenhead Advertiser and Newham Recorder.
- c. The City Corporation’s Carbon Removals Project, which is part of its Climate Action Strategy, appeared in The Sun, The Express, The Scottish Daily Express, Epping Forest Guardian, New Start, Environment Journal, Pro Landscaper and This Is Local London. The reports covered a new wildflower meadow planted in the Epping Forest buffer lands, which will remove carbon from the atmosphere at the site. Chairman of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee, Graeme Doshi-Smith was quoted.

Qualitative Analysis

- a. Coverage of the City Corporation’s Green Flag and London in Bloom success was very positive, showcasing the organisation as a leading provider of green spaces across London and southeast England. Media reports on the Carbon Removals Project achieved positive national coverage.

Air quality

- a. The Evening Standard reported that drivers are being urged to switch off their engines while stationary, as part of a new campaign led by the City of London Corporation and Camden Council. Chairman of the Port Health and

Environmental Services Committee, Keith Bottomley, was quoted. Further coverage in City Matters, London News Today and Highways News.

- b. City A.M., City Matters and Evening Standard reported on the Square Mile's nitrogen dioxide levels dropping by 42 per cent over the past five years, with further improvements expected through the City Corporation's Air Quality Strategy. Port Health and Environmental Services Committee Chairman, Keith Bottomley, was quoted. The story was also reported in Highways News, and Air Quality News

Qualitative Analysis

- a. Coverage on the idling engines campaign presented the City Corporation as an organisation taking bold and practical action to combat air pollution across the capital, in partnership with local authorities. Media reports on a 42% drop in Square Mile nitrogen dioxide levels was positive and factual.

Education

- a. Coverage appeared in East London Advertiser, Hackney Gazette and City Matters on the official opening of the new home for City of London Academy Shoreditch Park. Chair of the City of London Academies Trust Board, Tijs Broeke, was quoted.
- b. City of London School for Girls was named in The Times as one of the 20 best private schools in the UK. Meanwhile the City of London School and Newham Collegiate Sixth Form Centre, which is part of the City of London Academies Trust, featured in The Times list of the best schools in London.
- c. Newham Collegiate Sixth Form Centre was also mentioned in an article in The Daily Telegraph about state school students being picked for Oxford and Cambridge.

Qualitative Analysis

- a. Coverage was positive in tone and positioned the City Corporation as a leading education provider in London.

Police Authority Board

- a. The Daily Telegraph interviewed Chair of the City of London Police Authority Board, James Thomson, who called for fraud to be included in the Online Safety Bill. His comments also appeared in City Matters.

Qualitative Analysis

- a. Significant positive national coverage appeared on page two of the newspaper, reaching a large audience both in print and online on a priority issue for the Police Authority Board and the City of London Police

Sports

- a. Findings of a new report, commissioned by the City Corporation and UK Sport, which found major sport events could deliver a £4 billion 'soft power' boost, was covered by BBC London News and over 43 UK regional media titles through PA including Bristol Post.
- b. The City of London Corporation was referenced in coverage of the London Sport Awards, run in partnership with the City Corporation, in The National, Salesground, Best in You, Wilts and Gloucestershire Standard, KNews, Secure Books, South Wales Guardian and The Gazette.

Qualitative Analysis

- a. Positive media coverage of the report reached a large national and London audience, making the case for adopting a more co-ordinated UK-wide approach on sport and ensuring major sporting events are linked to trade and wider international goals.

Arts and Culture

- a. BBC covered the 'Borealis' lights display coming to Guildhall Yard this December. Chair of the City of London Corporation's Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee, Wendy Hyde, was quoted. Further coverage in The Guardian, Daily Mirror, The Daily Telegraph, ITV, Chiswick Herald, and Visit London.
- b. Coverage appeared in the Evening Standard about a new free exhibition celebrating the photography of iconic band The Jam due to open at the City Corporation's Barbican Music Library on January 14. Chair of the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee, Wendy Hyde, was quoted. Photographer Derek D'Souza was also interviewed on ITV London News.

Qualitative Analysis

- a. Major positive national and London coverage of the City Corporation/GLA initiative to help attract people back to London and then Square Mile.

Charitable Giving

- a. Sky News, LBC and Magic Radio reported on an £18,000 City Bridge Trust grant to The Dot Collective for a theatre project which allows people living with dementia to see their life on stage. The scheme uses theatre to reduce isolation and reconnect people with their memories. Also covered by London Post, Brixton Buzz, Sky News, Head Topics UK, Dispatchist, Eminentra and 16 other publications.

Qualitative Analysis

- a. Significant positive national broadcast coverage aligning to the funding priorities as set out in City Bridge Trust's 'Bridging Divides' funding strategy.

Options

11. None.

Proposals

12. None.

Key Data

13. See current position.

Conclusion

14. Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

Appendices

None

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