

Committee(s): Communications & Corporate Affairs Sub Committee	Dated: 07/06/2022
Subject: Corporate Affairs Update	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 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, Deputy Town Clerk & Executive Director of Communications and External Affairs	For Information
Report author: Matthew Baird, Senior Corporate Affairs Officer	

Summary

The below report outlines the activities of the Corporate Affairs Team since the last meeting of the Public Relations Sub Committee on 24 January 2022.

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, workstreams have refocused onto other areas of support and engagement.

Elsewhere, developments in Ukraine have also focused attention on ways in which the City of London Corporation can support refugees.

Work is continuing to promote the City Corporation's sustainable finance agenda and promoting the competitiveness of the City as well as the ongoing recovery from COVID-19.

Internally, the Team has been working to support the transition to the new Policy Chairman, particularly with London focused engagement.

Members have asked about our response to the Government's Levelling Up White Paper, which is covered in a separate report.

Recommendation(s)

- To note the report

Main Report

Ukraine

1. With fast moving, international developments, the Corporate Affairs Team have:
 - a. Drafted a letter to the newly appointed Minister for Refugees Lord Harrington following a resolution of the Court of Common Council, urging the Government to significantly improve the process for accepting refugees from Ukraine.
 - b. Supported the former Policy Chair with speaking notes for the Court statement in March 2022. Efforts have also been made to reiterate our core messaging on Ukraine to partners via subsequent speaking engagements.
 - c. Monitored the Government's announcements in relation to sanctions.
 - d. Briefed and supported the Town Clerk for a meeting with the Minister for London.

London Engagement

2. Ensuring that the City Corporation's messaging and pan-London relations remain strong, the Corporate Affairs Team have:
 - a. Provided stakeholder mapping and political advice for the City of London Police's communications and engagement plan.
 - b. Helped to build pan-London relations by arranging six meetings with borough leaders across London for the former Policy Chair.
 - c. Arranged introductions to newly elected London borough leaders for the Policy Chairman with meetings to follow.
 - d. Supported the Sheriffs with their Old Bailey lunch engagements with political stakeholders Nickie Aiken MP and Emily Thornberry MP.
 - e. Advised internal colleagues on pan-London stakeholder lists for the London Government Dinner and suggested speaking remarks for the Lord Mayor.
 - f. Aided Transport for London's public relations campaign for opening of the Elizabeth Line as well as briefing the Policy Chairman the reopening of the Northern Line Bank branch and related engagement with the Mayor of London.

Competitiveness

3. To ensure London and the UK maintain a globally competitive Financial and Professional Service sector, the Corporate Affairs Team have:
 - a. Worked with colleagues in Innovation and Growth to provide briefing for the Lord Mayor and Policy Chair for their regular catch-up meetings with the Investment Minister, Lord Grimstone.

- b. Provided briefing for the former Policy Chair for meetings with senior politicians such as Trade Policy Minister Penny Mordaunt MP, former Health Secretary Matt Hancock MP and Shadow Attorney General Emily Thornberry MP.
 - c. Disseminated the City Corporation's benchmarking report among key Government and Opposition politicians.
 - d. Supported City Corporation colleagues working on the Socio-Economic Diversity Taskforce with engagement with Ministers.
 - e. Advocated for the Online Safety Bill to name fraud as a priority harm and for paid-for adverts to be within the scope of the Bill, both of which were included when the Bill was published.
 - f. Continued to work with think tanks of all political persuasions and none on issues of importance to the City Corporation, including attending relevant events and reporting back.
 - g. Organised City Corporation support for the Financial Times' Financial Literacy Inclusion Campaign.
 - h. Liaised with industry partners on areas of joint working.
 - i. Provided speeches for the former Policy Chair's visit to MIPIM which promoted London's property offering as part of our competitiveness strategy and highlighting London's recovery compared to rival cities.
4. Going forward, the Team will continue to work with colleagues across the City Corporation to promote the Competitiveness Strategy, particularly engaging with the most relevant political stakeholders.

Sustainable Finance

5. In supporting the City Corporation's sustainable finance agenda, the Team has:
- a. Advised colleagues organising the Net Zero Delivery Summit on political engagement.
 - b. Organised for the Lord Mayor to appear at a Whitehall and Industry Group webinar on "Climate finance post-COP26: a cross sector perspective" and worked with colleagues to provide a speech and briefing.
 - c. Continued to facilitate the work of the UK Cities Climate Investment Commission (UKCCIC) and supported the former Policy Chair and the former Vice Chair of Policy – now Deputy Policy Chairman – in their engagement with this.
6. As a strategic priority going forward, the Team will continue to promote the successes of the Net Zero Delivery Summit and continue to support the UKCCIC.

Recovery

7. By supporting the ongoing recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Corporate Affairs Team have and continues to:

- a. Provide coordination across all City Corporation departments on COVID-19 messaging, particularly through the London Leaders COVID Committee.
 - b. Build an understanding of recovery pressures of other London Boroughs, particularly in the Central Activity Zone, via borough leader engagements.
 - c. Ensure that the messaging of the City Corporation around recovery is fed into London Councils decision making bodies, such as the Pandemic Steering Group Committee and regular Executive meetings.
8. The team also drafted the Policy Chair's speech to the Court of Common Council, which included an update on the City Corporation's response and the relaunch of the Square Smile campaign.

Levelling Up

9. There has been significant engagement on the Government's Levelling up agenda which is covered in a separate report before the Sub Committee.

Supporting Transition

10. To help ensure the smooth transition and external relations building for the new Policy Chairman, the Corporate Affairs Team have:
 - a. Prepared a political engagement programme for the new Policy Chairman, covering both local and national political stakeholders.
 - b. Secured a meeting with the incoming Chair of Central London Forward to build relations and an understanding of the needs of the City Corporation with an important representative group.
 - c. Supported the incoming Policy Chairman with Barbican Resident's Association engagement and building relations with City residents.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Strategic implications

11. 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 City 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

12. 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

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

Matthew Baird

Senior Corporate Affairs Officer, Town Clerks Department

T: 07718569860

E: matthew.baird@cityoflondon.gov.uk