

<b>Committee(s):</b> Policy and Resources Committee – For decision	<b>Dated:</b> 19/10/23
<b>Subject:</b> City Orientation programme for London-based postgraduate students	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	Corporate Plan outcomes 6, 7 and 8
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?</b>	N/A
<b>Report of:</b> City Remembrancer	<b>For Decision</b>

### Summary

This report proposes the establishment, in collaboration with Goodenough College, of a City of London orientation programme for a selected cadre of overseas postgraduate students studying in London.

The programme is expected to generate a mutually beneficial outcome for the students and the City and is consistent with the Corporation's role as a major instrument of soft power in the national interest.

### Recommendation(s)

Members are invited to agree that the proposal for the establishment of an orientation programme in the terms stated in this report be supported.

### Main Report

#### Background

1. London is a hub for international postgraduate study and many of the students, particularly from developing countries, become leading figures in their home countries later in their careers. A substantial number of the most able ones (Chevening, Commonwealth and Marshall scholars for example) stay at Goodenough College, the residential campus for postgraduate students which has strong City connections.
2. The knowledge these postgraduates have of the City beyond the label used for the international financial sector based in London is often extremely limited. The programme described in this report seeks to address that deficiency. Such engagement should have mutually beneficial consequences in giving participants an insight into the City, its values and its institutions, generating trust and goodwill and building empathy with the City and the UK.

3. The Chair of the Education Board has commented that the proposed programme would fit well with the City's recently announced initiative in partnership with Goldsmiths College to support 35 Equity Awards for UK-based undergraduate students from ethnic minority backgrounds. The programme would enhance the City's commitment to higher education along with the Mansion House Scholarship scheme and other initiatives.

## **Proposal**

4. Following discussions with Goodenough College, the paragraphs which follow outline a proposal for an annual orientation programme for a cadre of up to 30 postgraduate students to be developed. This would comprise a series of visits to City institutions, including the Corporation and its institutions, to familiarise the students with the City's many facets including, but not limited to, its workings as the leading international financial centre. It is envisaged that such visits would typically last around an hour on site with an introduction to the institution being visited and the opportunity for questions.
5. It is anticipated that those successfully completing the programme of visits, and having submitted an essay on their reflections or on a chosen City topic, would be nominated for the Freedom of the City and from that, an alumni network of high achieving international individuals (and future leaders) would be created.
6. The success of such a mission will of course be dependent on the preparedness of the Corporation and City institutions to participate. The Chairman of Policy has indicated support for involvement and informal soundings have also been taken of a selection of City institutions. The readouts received from these soundings have been uniformly favourable. The senior Alderman below the chair has, throughout, been a strong supporter of the idea which underpins this proposal, and continues to maintain that support.
7. The proposal does not require additional Corporation funding. It is anticipated that the Corporation's role will be covered as part of the general liaison role of the Remembrancer's Office through assistance in establishing and maintaining steady-state connections with the institutions as respects the programme, and ultimately in identifying Corporation nominators for those postgraduates offered the Freedom.
8. It is anticipated that the Freedom ceremonies would be undertaken in the standard format, possibly in a number of small groups. Insofar as costs might arise (for example if it were decided to accompany the Freedom ceremonies by the offer of the traditional toast or framing of the certificates) there is a residue of £19,850 in the Remembrancer's budget from an allocation originally made to support a scholarship programme devised at the time of the Irish State visit (with a similar soft power objective to the initiative described here) which has run its course. If Members were agreeable, the residue might be utilised for such purposes. The potential for such repurposing is referred to in the report of the Chamberlain on the Policy Initiatives Fund which will appear in the papers for the November meeting of this Committee.

## **Corporate and strategic implications**

Strategic implications – the proposal is aligned with and will support the delivery of the Corporate Plan specifically as respects the Corporation's role as an influencer and instrument of soft power. It also chimes with the programme anticipated by the senior Alderman below the chair whose support is noted at paragraph 6 above.

Financial implications – the proposal does not involve additional Corporation expenditure. Administrative input will be provided through the City Remembrancer's existing departmental machinery and any additional costs arising from decisions about such matters as the conduct of Freedoms indicated above can be met from the residue of £19,850 allocated to the inactive scholarship programme indicated at paragraph 8.

Resource implications - beyond the administrative input provided through the City Remembrancer's existing departmental machinery and the conduct of the Freedom ceremonies by the Chamberlain's Court, which is part of the Court's routine work, none are anticipated.

Legal implications – none

Risk implications – none

Equalities implications – the programme is intended to have a positive impact on the City Corporation's fostering of greater equality, diversity and inclusion.

Climate implications – none

Security implications – none

## **Conclusion**

9. The establishment of an orientation programme will provide a mechanism for early positive engagement with individuals who are likely to become influential in their own countries. This engagement has the potential for benefits to the students but also to the City and the UK through the positive relationships built at an early and influential point in their careers.

**Appendices** - none

**Paul Double**  
**City Remembrancer**