

Appendix 1: Contingency/Policy Initiatives Fund Application – Election Engagement Campaign 2025

Rationale – The new draft Corporate Plan contains objectives to increase the number of voters registered on the Ward List and as candidates in our 19/20 March 2025 elections. In order to meet those objectives most effectively, including ahead of the 30 November 2024 registration deadline, this report proposes resourcing for activities for an election engagement campaign. No existing local budget exists for election engagement and this activity has historically been funded by the committee on an ad-hoc basis.

Strategic/Priority Link – In addition to supporting outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9 and 10 of the existing Corporate Plan, this application addresses key objectives listed in the new draft Corporate Plan’s “Diverse Engaged Communities” outcome, specifically:

- *Increase the electorate registered to vote in City-wide elections pre and post 2025.*
- *Increase the number of candidates standing for election in the City-wide elections in 2025.*

Outcomes – That the application fulfils its objectives using the performance measures outlined in the new draft Corporate Plan:

- *Increase number of voters at 2025 and 2029 elections.*
- *Increase number of candidates at 2025 and 2029 elections.*
- *Increase number of contested wards at 2025 and 2029 elections.*

In particular, we will draw up target lists of unregistered and under-registered occupiers and report on their level of engagement.

Economy – While much of the proposed resourcing goes towards staff costs, which are generally fixed, we will continue to ensure our election engagement campaign provides strong levels of value for money, as outlined in previous VFM reports. This includes the use of iterative testing and targeting in our digital content, the effective use of data to better focus engagement and minimising event costs – including exploring the use of free spaces for community events.

Delivery – Activity will begin immediately, with a Campaign Manager engaged as soon as is practicable. The campaign will be run in four stages – with a focus on information-gathering and relationship-building until the end of May 2024, pre-campaign targeted outreach June to August 2024, the registration campaign September to November 2024, then candidate engagement and turnout through to 20 March 2025.

Evaluation – While many external factors may control outcomes in this application, we intend to see a substantial increase in the performance measures outlined above. As in the previous elections, we will evaluate effective activities and channels of resources to inform future campaigns.

Reporting – While Policy and Resources Committee will receive an update prior to the start of the registration campaign in September 2024 and subsequent to the election in March 2025, its Communications & Corporate Affairs Sub-Committee will

receive more regular information, as part of the update report of the Corporate Communications and External Affairs division. The final progress reporting forms will be completed as specified by the new policy.

Repeat Expenditure – Previous election cycles have seen election engagement work funded through Committee Contingency, including the 2021/22 elections. This funding was successful in significantly increasing the size of the Ward List and other engagement objectives. There is no local risk budget for election engagement.

Benefit Sustainment – Engaging people in our democratic processes, either as potential voters or candidates, helps to create habits of engagement and strengthens the long-term connections between the City of London Corporation and our citizenry.