

Committee(s)	Dated:
Communications and Corporate Affairs Sub Committee (Policy & Resources) – For information	28 February 2024
Policy and Resources – For information	18 March 2024
Subject: Memberships and subscriptions	Public
Which outcome in the City Corporation’s Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	Corporate Plan outcomes 2-10
Does this proposal extra revenue and/or capital funding	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of the funding	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department	N/A
Report of: Executive Director of Communications and External Affairs, Executive Director of Innovation & Growth (IG) and the Remembrancer	For Information
Report author: Kristy Sandino, Assistant Director Corporate Affairs Daniel O’Byrne, Strategic Operations Director Bruce Hunt, City Remembrancer’s Office	

Summary

As part of the City of London Corporation’s external engagement strategy on City Corporation strategic areas of interest, a number of memberships and subscriptions are held across various City Corporation teams.

The Communications and Corporate Affairs Sub Committee considered a report at its meeting in November 2023 setting out the City Corporation’s relationship with think tanks. This report complements that one and provides a broader overview of corporate memberships and subscriptions.

For Members’ awareness, a further paper will be submitted to Policy and Resources Committee in March 2024 on the City Corporation’s Partnership Organisations. These are bodies which the organisation provides funding to and, in return, receives benefits beyond those conferred by a membership or subscription model.

It is noted to Members that a similar activity, led by the Deputy Town Clerk, is underway in respect of capturing and updating all of the City Corporation’s associated “Outside Bodies”. The initial activity is being overseen by the Civic Affairs Sub-Committee with proposals to come forward to Policy & Resources in due course.

As part of the activity being undertaken by the Deputy Town Clerk, it is likely that some commonality and consistency of approach in respect of assessing any return on

financial or resource contribution, thereby enabling informed value judgments on continued involvements, might be identified and thereafter be applied across the piece. This will help ensure that the City Corporation understands collectively the extent of the bodies with which it is engaged, and can prioritise ongoing engagement as required in the event of resource pressures.

The memberships and subscriptions described in this paper are reviewed within the context of annual business planning to ensure their ongoing relevance and alignment with the City Corporation's strategic objectives as well as value for money.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the current memberships and subscriptions.

Main Report

Background

1. The City of London Corporation engages regularly with third party organisations, financial and professional services organisations, government and policy makers, think tanks and other relevant membership bodies.
2. The engagement serves three core purposes:
 - a. To proactively engage and contribute in senior level discussions across various ecosystems about the City Corporation and its strategic priorities.
 - b. To proactively communicate the City Corporation's strategy and provide engagement opportunities and platforms for senior spokespeople.
 - c. To afford wider opportunities for Members and Officers to engage through events, conferences or other bespoke meetings.
 - d. To learn and gather information that is relevant to the Corporation and its strategic priorities to be disseminated internally, where relevant and appropriate.
3. These relationships are held across the wider City Corporation, predominantly in teams within Innovation & Growth (IG), Corporate Affairs and Remembrancer's, and further the aims of the overarching Corporate Plan as a whole.
4. This report focuses solely on memberships and subscriptions and does not include organisations to which the City Corporation provides formal funding as part of a wider strategic partnership.
5. Some organisations operate a subscription and/or membership model with associated costs. These are reviewed regularly to ensure alignment with the City Corporation's strategic priorities as well as with its policy objectives.

6. It is important for the City Corporation to be able to access a range of information, expertise and views to inform its own strategic decision-making processes. Organisations or membership bodies that are engaged reflect the need for the Corporation to operate across the political spectrum.
7. The organisations or membership bodies reflect the Corporation's target markets as well as the need for the Corporation to be well briefed across wider policy agendas.
8. Following a long period as a member of the Industry Advisory Group to the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Financial Markets and Service, the Corporation has successfully bid to take over the administration of this APPG. This will be managed through the Remembrancer's Office. This move secures the future of the group, which has been the leading cross-party voice for wholesale financial markets and services in Parliament for over 20 years. This provides both the sector and the Corporation an established vehicle for outreach both in the run up to and after the general election.

Current Position

9. Across the above departments, the City Corporation currently holds memberships or subscriptions with the following organisations or groups:

Innovation and Growth

- Confederation of British Industry (CBI)
- British American Business
- OnePolicyPlace
- EU-UK Forum
- British Chamber of Commerce EU & Belgium
- QED Brussels
- The Centre for European Policy Studies
- The Future of Sustainable Data Alliance

Remembrancer's

- Industry and Parliament Trust
- Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council (CWEIC)
- The Financial Markets Law Committee (FMLC)
- Standing International Forum of Commercial Courts (SIFoCC)
- The UK Soft Power Group

Corporate Affairs

- Chatham House
- Centre for London
- International Business and Diplomatic Exchange
- Local Government Information Unit
- New Financial (including our sponsorship of the Women in Finance Charter)
- New Local
- Onward
- Progressive Britain

- Whitehall and Industry Group

Environment, Planning and Development

- Opportunity London

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- Stonewall
- Social Mobility Foundation

10. Additional detail on our memberships and subscriptions can be found at **Annex 1**.

11. Per the November Communications and Corporate Affairs Subcommittee, the Corporate Affairs Team committed to sighting the Committee on costs of the current think tank memberships, which can be found for information at **Annex 2**.

Proposals

12. The City of London Corporation will continue to engage with a range of policy makers, policy influencers and membership organisations across the geo and domestic policy spectrum.

13. This activity will be aligned to core strategic policy priorities of the organisation, including the Corporation's Competitiveness strategy, and be managed by a joint group of Officers from across Innovation and Growth, Planning, Corporate Affairs and Remembrancer's. Updates will be provided as part of the regular departmental reports to the Communications and Corporate Affairs Sub Committee.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

14. This activity, these platforms, engagements and communications opportunities support the delivery of the City Corporation's agreed policy agenda as set out in the Corporate Plan.

15. It also provides wider opportunities for Members and Officers to engage through events, conferences or other bespoke meetings. In turn, it provides the chance to learn and gather information that is relevant to the City Corporation and its strategic priorities to be disseminated internally, where relevant and appropriate. It also provides us reputational benefits, aids in increasing visibility and understanding of the City Corporation's contribution and wider impact.

16. This work would also help deliver outcomes 2 – 10 of the 2018-23 Corporate Plan.

Resource Implications

17. No resource implications arise from the recommendations in this report. The majority of the resources utilised for the memberships and subscriptions are deployed from the local risk budget of the identified department.

Risk Implications

18. Given the spread of activity across business, policy and key markets, the risk is currently assessed as low, but is kept under review. The City Corporation mitigates risk by ensuring a balance across the organisations it works with, particularly those in the political ecosystem.

Equalities Implications

19. No equalities implications have been identified although we have the opportunity to use platforms afforded by memberships to showcase our work on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI).

20. No new legal, security or climate implications arise from the recommendations in this report.

Conclusion

21. Members are asked to note the work of the Communications and External Affairs, Innovation and Growth, and Remembrancer teams in relation to the memberships and subscriptions held across policy related organisations to further the aims of the overarching Corporate Plan as a whole.

Appendices

Annex 1: Additional Detail on Memberships and Subscriptions

Non-public Annex 2: 2023 – 2024 Think Tank Corporate Membership Costings

Background Papers

Think Tank Review and Membership 2023/2024 to the Communications and Corporate Affairs Subcommittee November 2023.

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ANNEX 1 – Additional Detail on Memberships and Subscriptions

1. A separate Think Tank Review and Membership 2023/2024 Paper went to the Communications and Corporate Affairs Subcommittee in November 2023. Memberships held in Corporate Affairs are reviewed on a per annum basis, with Members given the opportunity for feedback every Autumn. Wider Memberships and Subscriptions are also reviewed annually by P&R.
2. The Confederation of British Industry (CBI) is a cross-sectoral business organisation whose membership includes firms and trade associations. It maintains it speaks on behalf of 170,000 businesses. The City of London Corporation has been a member of the CBI since 2004, paying an annual membership fee. The City Corporations membership has been discussed at recent Policy and Resources Committees and, after a recent suspension of Membership due to a series of sexual misconduct claims, the annual subscription renewal was agreed at January 2024 P&R.
3. British American Business is a valuable partner for the Corporation on our US policy work. We have recently accepted an invite to join their new Financial & Professional Services subcommittee and it is an important relationship to retain.
4. QED Brussels is an event coordination and management service. They are well connected in the Brussels ecosystem, and their events often include speakers from European Commission and the European Parliament. Our Annual Membership includes being invited to attend in-person and hybrid events on a series of relevant topics like financial service regulation, sustainability and digitalisation. The membership also includes event speaking opportunities (10-minute presentation and participation in panel discussion). It is an important relationship to retain.
5. The Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS) is a Brussels-based think tank with areas of expertise that include among others: finance, economic and monetary affairs, trade, digitalisation and climate change. We are members of CEPS and the European Capital Markets Institute (ECMI), an independent think-tank CEPS. CEPS is strongly linked to the European Commission. We benefit from this by meeting key Commission officials at their events and task forces. We are running an event with CEPS at the end of the March. It is an important relationship to retain.
6. OnePolicyPlace (OPP) supports our work and provides daily, personalised, updates on the EU files that are of interest to us. This includes changes in legislation, summaries of meetings and committees etc. It also provides us with a daily newsletter that includes events that may be of interest. It is a valuable source of information.
7. British Chamber of Commerce EU & Belgium facilitates bilateral business & trade between the UK and Belgium. They often host officials from European institutions at their events. We strongly support their work and have been collaborating with them for a long time on a series of events and meetings. We

want to strengthen our relationship in the next months (e.g., by participating in some of their committees) and see the relationship as strategically important.

8. The rationale for the relationships with Chatham House, Centre for the Study of Financial Innovation, Local Government Information Unit, New Financial, New Local, Onward, Whitehall and Industry Group, and International Business and Diplomatic Exchange were laid out in the 31/10/22 (see Appendix 1) (Item 7 – Think Tank Review and Membership 2022/2023) to the Communications and Corporate Affairs Subcommittee.
9. The Industry and Parliamentary Trust (IPT) is an independent, non-lobbying, non-partisan charity that provides a trusted platform of engagement between Parliament and UK business. The IPT is dually supported by cross-party representation of senior parliamentarians on its Board of Trustees, and through the patronage of its industry supporters. The IPT is non-party political and works with all parliamentarians and businesses of any sector or size. The City Corporation's membership provides a platform for a senior City spokesman at 6 events per year across the range of City Corporation policy interests.
10. In 2015, the City Corporation became a founding partner in the establishment of the Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council (CWEIC). The City has enjoyed a longstanding association with the Commonwealth and involvement with CWEIC represents the latest significant development in that relationship.
11. The FMLC was originally set up as an initiative of the Bank of England and the Corporation to identify issues of legal uncertainty in the financial markets, in recognition of the importance of this issue to the reputation of London as an international financial centre and the position of English Law as its transactional tool. It has since been conferred with charitable status with an added educational objective of increasing understanding of the operation of the financial markets. Members of the Committee are drawn from the judiciary, and City law firms with representatives of the Treasury, Bank of England and regulators, all serving unpaid in a personal capacity. The City Remembrancer provides advice in that capacity. The Committee is financed by voluntary contributions from the City firms which also provide the staff for the secretariat.
12. The Standing International Forum of Commercial Courts (SIFoCC) is a judicial initiative to support the rule of law. SIFoCC continues to facilitate collaboration between the world's Commercial Courts, to promote and support best practice and the just and effective resolution of commercial disputes. It does so by organising conferences whereby Judges representing each country convene together every 12-18 months. The Secretariat further supports an agreed programme of work that continues in between such conferences. The Secretariat also continues to run a Judicial Observation Programme. The programme enables a small number of younger, relatively junior judges from around the world to shadow the work of judges in London thus learning from experienced judges based in established courts.

13. The UK Soft Power Group (UKSPG) is the premier group representing non-governmental UK-based soft power assets. A membership-based organisation, the group seeks to provide a conduit for the members to speak to, and with, government and parliament figures, as well as to the UK's diplomatic corps. The British Council is a co-convenor of the UKSPG with the British Foreign Policy Group (BFPG).
14. Opportunity London an initiative jointly led and funded by the Mayor of London, London Councils and the City of London Corporation. It promotes sustainable investment in property, regeneration and green infrastructure across London's boroughs and communities; providing a united front to investors by collectively showcasing London as an attractive destination to invest and by building long-term relationships with strategic investors. Opportunity London brings key stakeholders together to encourage external investment to deliver long-term prosperity to our city.
15. Stonewall is a charity that advocates for LGBT rights in the UK. The organisation campaigns on a number of LGBT issues and holds the Diversity Champions Programme and LGBTQ+ Workplace training for employers. The City Corporation's membership is currently under review by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team and it is proposed it is raised at the EDI sub-committee for further discussion.
16. Social Mobility Foundation is a charity that supports students from low-income backgrounds to get into top UK universities. Membership of the Social Market Foundation gives the Corporation the opportunity to showcase our work on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. It is also useful for benchmarking purposes, it gives access to relevant resources like events, toolkits, and webinars, and it allows us to understand good practice across a range of sectors.