

Committee(s): Equality Diversity & Inclusion Sub-Committee	Dated 26 June 2024
Subject: Social Mobility Index Report	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	All Corporate Plan Outcomes are supported by this work
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N/A
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
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Summary

Improving social mobility is one pillar of our Equality Objectives 2024-29 and part of our Corporate Plan 2024-29 and People Strategy 2024-29. Our annual benchmarking efforts via the Social Mobility Employer Index allow us to learn and improve how we enable social mobility. This year officers have taken a radically different approach to compiling the submission, working across City Corporation to gather as much input as available, while being cognisant of feedback from previous years. Consequently, our 2024 submission (appended) covers a range of internal and external social mobility related activity. This was submitted to the Social Mobility Foundation by the deadline of 7 June.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

Note this report and annex: City Corporation’s 2024 Social Mobility Employer Index Submission

Main Report

Background

1. The City Corporation worked with The Social Mobility Foundation to set up the Social Mobility Index (SMI) in 2017. The Social Mobility Employer Index is an annual benchmarking and assessment tool for employers. The Index shows how employers perform on eight areas of employer-led social mobility. In addition, it sets out a vision for measuring and monitoring social mobility outcomes over the next 30 years.

2. In 2018, the City Corporation was ranked 66th on the index, and rose to 56th in 2019, 50th in 2020 and 40th in 2021. However, rankings declined to 67th and 87th in 2022 and 2023 respectively. Competition has grown as employers are increasing social mobility initiatives and benchmarking themselves. However, attempts to collate information fell short last year. For the current cycle major efforts have been made to engage across the organisation to gather evidence, resulting in approximately 120 pages (annex 1) documenting our social mobility activities.
3. The Social Mobility Employer Index 2024 has eight areas of assessment. We have contributed substantial information under each section.
 - School outreach and work with young people
 - Attraction and university outreach
 - Recruitment and Selection
 - Routes into the employer
 - Data collection
 - Pay, progression and retention
 - Progression, culture and experiences hire
 - External Advocacy
4. To meet the 7 June deadline, the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion sub-Committee had the opportunity to review the submission. A draft was also shared with the City Corporation Executive Leadership Board chaired by the Town Clerk. Our full submission (see annex 1) includes extensive information on social mobility initiatives across City Corporation.
5. The format of our submission at annex 1 is challenging, and some content appears clunky and repetitive. It has been completed this way to allow for collaboration across the organisation and editing to meet word counts before uploading it question by question to the Social Mobility Foundation website. This means there are a few inconsistencies that will not appear in the final product. To ensure the Social Mobility Foundation has our full submission (noting some online sections contained word limit restrictions), with their permission, we have completed their form and submitted our full return in a PDF document.

Current Position

6. Social mobility remains a concern globally, with implications extending from individual opportunities to societal cohesion and economic prosperity. City Corporation recognises its responsibility to foster an environment conducive to upward mobility for all. Social mobility is one of our four published Equality Objectives reflecting the commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and sets out our ambition as follows:

Someone's socio-economic background should not limit their potential to flourish. Activities (cognisant with the Social Mobility Index recommendations for improvement) may include:

- Continue to use our influence to advance socio-economic diversity across the City, building on the success of the Socio-Economic Diversity Taskforce report and its recommendations.
 - Collaborate with a variety of communities to enable opportunities for those from lower socio-economic backgrounds to get in, get on, and belong in the City Corporation.
 - Continue to measure our performance as an employer across the eight areas set out in the Social Mobility Index.
 - Closer working across the City of London Corporation family to tackle barriers collectively and holistically for underrepresented groups.
7. Progress has been made in advancing social mobility within City Corporation during past year. In addition to the Equality Objectives 2024-29, the Corporate Plan 2024-29 commits us to improving social mobility and reduce inequalities; the People Strategy 2024-29 provides structures to improve social mobility via internal mechanisms – all set out in the submission. Together, these are the framework to embed organisational outcomes to achieve an inclusive and diverse culture and articulate our focus on socio-economic diversity and intersectionality with both staff and external communities – achieving our ambition to be a world-class organisation.
8. In addition, the new staff Social Mobility Network launched this year. The purpose of the network is to represent and advocate for colleagues from less-privileged backgrounds to achieve their development goals, collectively share their experiences and support one another to make a difference and build a stronger, more inclusive, and socio-economically diverse culture at City Corporation. As well as these, the submission contains a round-up of social mobility initiatives by our family of schools (who provide an extensive offering), our green spaces, the Barbican Centre, GSMD, Innovation & Growth and much more.
9. Once in post, the new EEDI Director will be taking forward collaborative endeavours with HR and all other relevant areas within the organisation to continue to drive forward initiatives aimed at achieving our social mobility ambitions both internally and externally.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Strategic implications - All Corporate Plan 2024-29 Outcomes are impacted (directly and indirectly) by this work, as well as outcomes in the People Strategy and Equality Objectives. This is a continuation and development of the activity originally set out in the Social Mobility Strategy (2018-28) that stalled during pandemic and following the TOM.

Resource implications – £1200+VAT covered by the EEDI budget

Legal implications – none

Risk implications – Potential reputational risk mitigated by the actions in train to address the feedback from the SMI report.

Equalities implications – This proposal is a core part of our commitment to equality; it supports City Corporation’s commitment to be an organisation where people feel

respected, and they belong - going beyond the protected characteristics (as set at the Equality Act 2010) to include to social mobility.

Climate implications – none

Security implications – none

Conclusion

10. Officers have collaborated extensively to improve our 2024 submission to the Social Mobility Employer Index. Members will be updated as this work progresses once we have received feedback on our input – expected later this year. At this stage results will be presented alongside next steps.

Appendices

Annex 1 – 2024 City Corporation Social Mobility Employer Index Submission