# City of London Corporation Committee Report

<b>Committee(s):</b> Communications and Corporate Affairs Sub Committee – For Information	Dated: 05 February 2025			
Subject: Corporate Communications & External Affairs Update Report	Public report: For Information			
<ul> <li>This proposal:</li> <li>delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes</li> <li>provides statutory duties</li> <li>provides business enabling functions</li> </ul>	Diverse Engaged Communities, Dynamic Economic Growth, Vibrant Thriving Destination			
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No			
If so, how much?	£0			
What is the source of Funding?	Not applicable			
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	Not applicable			
Report of:	Dionne Corradine, Chief Strategy Officer & Paul Wright, the Remembrancer			
Report author:	Lisa Ward - Interim Director of Communications Transformation & Strategy, Mark Gettleson - Interim Director of Campaigns and Engagement, Kristy Sandino - Interim Director of Strategic Communications & External Affairs, John Park - Assistant Director of Media (Public Services), Kay Abdilahi - Assistant Director of Media (Financial Services), Mark Mistry - Interim Director of Media & Digital Communications			

## Summary

This overarching update report covers the full remit of the Corporate Communications and External Affairs Division and includes the following:

- a. Corporate Affairs [Annex A]
- b. Campaigns and Community Engagement [Annex B]
- c. Media [Annex C]
- d. Publishing (Internal Communications and Digital) [Annex D]

# Recommendation

Members are asked to:

• Note the contents of this report.

## Main Report

#### Background

1. This report reflects the quarterly reporting of corporate communications and external affairs, to ensure there is a consistent approach to evaluation and the ability to compare impact and results quarter on quarter and year on year.

# Annex A– Corporate Affairs

#### Strategic Communications and Messaging Development

- 2. The bi-weekly strategic forward look grid meetings have become a helpful platform, inviting teams from across the City Corporation to present their intended activities and forward look priorities. These sessions are designed to surface key initiatives that may benefit from a stronger communications framework and to provide colleagues with a comprehensive overview of upcoming strategic priorities. This collaborative approach ensures greater alignment and maximises the impact of communication efforts across the organisation.
- 3. The focus on data-driven communications has continued to grow, with the team building on successes from the media and digital communication impact reports including the International Investment Summit and the Lord Mayor's Show. Enhanced performance metrics and feedback loops are being used to refine and strengthen evaluation processes in the coming quarter, ensuring continuous improvement in our communication outcomes.
- 4. The Interim Director of Strategic Communication and External Affairs, together with the Strategic Communications and Insights Manager, collaborated closely with

teams across the City Corporation including, the Media Team, Internal Communications Team, HR and City Surveyor's, and the Markets Directorate to develop and deliver a cohesive communication and engagement strategy. This strategy communicated the decision by the Court of Common Council on 26 November to cease the Markets Co-location Programme. Efforts to date have focused on ensuring clarity, transparency, and alignment with the City Corporation's strategic objectives. A detailed paper outlining the Markets Communication and Engagement Programme has been prepared separately.

- 5. The Corporate Affairs Team played a pivotal role in crafting strategic communications and cohesive narratives for several key initiatives and events. These efforts included shaping messaging, facilitating strategic engagement opportunities, and providing briefings to Senior Officers, the Policy Chairman, and the Lord Mayor. Highlights included:
  - Shaping messaging and facilitating strategic engagement opportunities, and briefing Senior Officers, the Policy Chairman, and the Lord Mayor for the HMT Christmas Reception, where the Economic Secretary to the Treasury (City Minister) hosted a reception at Guildhall to thank the industry for their engagement over 2024.
  - Supporting the London Government Dinner, which brought together all Borough Leaders and Chief Executives, members of the London Assembly, and key figures from the GLA functional bodies. Given this was the first London Government Dinner since last year's General Election, all 75 of London's MPs were also invited. Speeches were delivered by the Lord Mayor Alastair King, Mayor of London Sadiq Khan, and the Chair of London Councils, Cllr Claire Holland. The Lord Mayor reiterated his priorities under the theme "Growth Unleashed," focusing on celebrating successes within the Square Mile, adopting competitive technologies, and encouraging responsible risk-taking. He also referenced significant City Corporation activities, including the Court's decision to cease the Markets Co-location Programme.
  - Consulting on the Policy Chairman's speech to drive impactful remarks at the Fabian's Conference, supporting thought leadership on key policy areas of importance to the City Corporation and HM Government.
  - Preparing and shaping messaging with Innovation and Growth for a Roundtable on Trade policy, which focused on advancing thought leadership and policy innovation.

Through these activities, the team has reinforced the City of London Corporation's reputation and influence in key forums.

# Political Engagement

6. Since the last sub-committee meeting in November 2024, the Corporate Affairs Team has prioritised:

- a) Organising a Christmas reception for the then-Economic Secretary to the Treasury with key financial services stakeholders. All Members of the Communications and Corporate Affairs Sub Committee were invited.
- b) Drafting and deploying introductory letters to the new Shadow Cabinet.
- c) Facilitating and drafting briefings for:
  - The Policy Chairman's bilateral meeting with the Secretary of State for Scotland.
  - The Lord Mayor and Policy Chairman's meeting with the Minister for Investment.
  - The Policy Chairman's meeting with the Economic Secretary to the Treasury.
  - The Policy Chairman's roundtable with the Minister for Trade.
  - The Policy Chairman's meeting with the City's MP, Rachel Blake MP.
  - Members seated next to politicians at the Financial and Professional Services dinner, the Lord Mayors Banquet and the London Government Dinner.
  - The Policy Chairman's meeting with the Permanent Secretary, Department for Business & Trade (postponed).
  - The Lord Mayor's meeting with the Shadow Secretary of State for Business and Trade.
  - Supporting Innovation and Growth colleagues on briefing and insights for the Policy Chairman's meeting with the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

# Pan-London Engagement

- 7. Since the last sub-committee meeting in November 2024, the Corporate Affairs Team has prioritised the following on Pan-London engagement:
  - a) Continued to monitor developments with the London Growth Plan, including working with Central London Forward and London Councils on City Corporation officer feedback on the draft Plan.
  - b) Working with external partners, successfully advocated for regulation of micromobility, which is now included in the English Devolution White Paper.
  - c) Provided Members and the Lord Mayor with speaking notes and VIP attendee backgrounds to assist with core messaging during the London Government Dinner.
  - d) Managed and continued to process casework matters from Members of Parliament.
  - e) Continued to maintain positive bilateral relations with the Mayor and Greater London Authority, such as through drafting and deploying congratulatory letter to the Mayor on his knighthood in the New Year Honours.

# **Engagement with External Partners**

8. Resources in the Corporate Affairs team continue to be impacted and proactive engagement with external partners has been affected. Since the last sub-

committee meeting in November 2024, the Corporate Affairs Team has prioritised the following on external partners engagement:

- a) Collaborating with Fabian Society on its annual conference held at the Guildhall in January.
- b) Collaborating with Centre for Policy Studies on its annual conference to be held at the Guildhall in March.
- c) Working with Innovation & Growth, negotiating a partnership with New Financial on a possible report on '*The interconnectedness of UK and EU capital markets*'.
- d) Preparing for a think tank review which will come to the next Communications and Corporate Affairs Sub-committee.

# Forward Look and Future Engagement

- e) Supporting the City Corporation with communications and political engagement regarding the policy priorities of the Policy Chairman with both the Government, as well as the new Shadow team.
- f) Negotiating strategic partnerships, such as events, that allow for opportunities for senior level political engagement. This includes events for both the Centre for Policy Studies and Fabian Society and discussions are underway with a number of additional partners on opportunities for 2025/2026.
- g) Preparations for 2025 Party Conference season, with a particular focus on ensuring efficient costs and ensuring an impactful programme. This includes collaborating with other teams on event subject matter and negotiating with possible event partners.
- h) Continuing to proactively secure senior level engagement across the political spectrum to allow for the opportunity to communicate and influence around key policy areas of strategic interest for the City Corporation.
- i) Seeking to secure high level political meetings for the Policy Chairman's visit to Northern Ireland, as well as an associated investment roundtable at the Guildhall.

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# Annex B – Campaigns and Community Engagement

# **City Belonging Project**

- 9. The City Belonging Project continues to grow in strength with the mailing list now having reached 3,000 individuals, an increase of approximately 20% since the last meeting of this sub-committee.
- 10. As part of Lord Mayor Alistair King's mayoral year, the Project is moving into a new phase with the launch of a series of City Belonging Networks. These will act as a channel for two-way communication and engagement between the City of London and communities of identity, background, interest, experience, faith and more, and in so doing, bring together Square Mile communities, networks and Employee Resource Groups across organisations of difference sizes and sectors.
- 11. In late 2024, the first three networks were launched; Latinos in the City was launched with the support of the London Stock Exchange Group in October, the City Muslim Network launched with the support of Fidelity International in December, and the City Jewish Network was launched at the Guildhall Channukah event. The City Belonging Project team is working with City workplaces to organise five further network launches early in 2025; for Women, Veterans & Reservists, LGBTQ+, Neurodiversity and social mobility. We are also in discussions relating to Parents & Carers, Black, and Sikh networks.
- 12. At the end of 2024, the City Belonging Project supported the City of London's key cultural events including Diwali and Channukah. Over the course of 2024, the Project facilitated 12 cultural events with 1041 registered in total, representing 435 unique organisations and workplaces. The Project now looks to 2025 to deliver a full calendar of relevant cultural activities and events. Focus in particular is being given to identifying workplaces to hold events at little or no cost to the organisation and a steady stream of such offers has been received.
- 13. Working in collaboration with our three Co-Convenors, the Faith in the City programme will launch at Mansion House on 3<sup>rd</sup> February. The landmark research and engagement programme, funded through the Community Infrastructure Levy Neighbourhood Fund and running through to the end of May, aims to understand the faith and belief needs of the Square Mile and put forward ideas for the future.

# **Resident Engagement**

14. On 10 December, we hosted our fourth City Question Time of the year with 110 residents in attendance alongside members, officers and City Corporation teams. For this event we trialled an adapted format to enhance resident engagement. Instead of the traditional panel discussion, this event featured four smaller roundtable discussions led by members representing Port Health, Planning & Transport, Community & Children's Services, and the City of London Police. The

event concluded with a well-received festive drinks reception accompanied by music, providing residents with a valuable opportunity to connect with fellow residents, members, and officers in an informal setting. A "Finance Special" City Question Time will take place at the Barbican on 3 February.

- 15. Officers are continuing to work with the Resident Engagement Policy Lead to develop the Square Mile resident offer, in line with other London local authorities and to broaden the reach of our resident engagement work. Part of this will include a new "City Living" residents' card, due to launch later this year. Work is also underway to create a clear resident page on the City Corporation website.
- 16. The latest edition of the localised City Living printed newsletter was distributed to all Square Mile residences, with content included from across departments and institutions. The monthly email newsletter continues to perform strongly, with an open rate of 65–75%, and 7% growth since November.

# **Election Engagement**

- 17. Voter registration closed on 30 November and the new Ward List will be published on 15 February. While the precise numbers are being finalised at the point of writing, the 2025–2026 Ward List will be the largest in a decade.
- 18. Focused outreach to a target list of 500 previously unregistered organisations saw approximately 30% of these registering - including SMBC, Mastercard, Chubb, and Deliveroo. Overall, approximately one third of worker voters were not on the previous Ward List, including more than half in Bishopsgate ward.
- 19. Now the registration period has concluded, focus has turned to candidate engagement and voter mobilisation. Three candidate briefing events are being held in January. The first two of which attracted 102 unique individuals, the vast majority of whom would be first-time candidates. Feedback from these sessions has been strong 86% of attendees surveyed rated the session as 'excellent' or 'good'. The Standing page on the Speak for the City website has also been updated with a robust frequently asked questions section.
- 20. Once the Ward List is published, the team will implement a multi-channel voter communication strategy, leveraging post, email, and social media to ensure voters are fully informed about how, where, and when to vote. The candidate guide will be launched in early March and will be promoted as part of these efforts.
- 21. The lack of a central CRM tool, where an individual or company's relationships across the City Corporation can be viewed easily, continues to be one of the major hurdles to effective election engagement. Work is underway with DITS to ensure this is addressed as part of the Data Lighthouse Project.

22. A full report on our election engagement campaign will be brought to this subcommittee and the Policy & Resources committee following post-election evaluation.

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## Annex C – Media Relations

#### **Media Impact Analysis**

23. The Media Team delivers a quarterly digital communications report to enhance our impact analysis. This reporting period covers October, November, and December 2024 (Q4).

Overview

24. The Media Team generated 9,470 media mentions (excluding the International Investment Summit), including 8,730 online, 416 on television, 235 in print and 91 on radio. Key outlets for coverage included the Press Association, City A.M., BBC, Daily Mail, Financial Times, The Independent, The London Standard, and Daily Telegraph.

#### **Media Highlights**

#### International Investment Summit

25. The Corporate Communications Team collaborated with the Government to deliver communications for the summit, which achieved over 8,300 news items. The Policy Chairman was interviewed by ITV News and Channel 4, emphasising that the summit represents an opportunity to hear from the Government and their total commitment to growing the economy. Social media posts generated 8,740 engagements with a reach of 55,400 impressions.

#### Lord Mayor's Show

- 26. The Communications Team delivered a comprehensive proactive media, social media, and advertising campaign to promote the Lord Mayor's Show, which was covered positively in over 1,120 articles. This included major national, London, international, and consumer coverage, for example, in the Daily Mail, Metro, Bloomberg, and BBC London News. The Media Team maximised coverage by giving the Press Association and Getty exclusive access to the route. Coverage carried core messaging including on the Lord Mayor's theme, with hundreds of articles publishing key narratives on Growth Unleashed. Broadcast live on BBC One, the programme included interviews of the Lord Mayor. The Media Team worked with the BBC to help deliver core messaging on Growth Unleashed, City Belonging Project, the Lord Mayor's Appeal, and City Bridge Foundation, to a peak audience of 1.1 million TV viewers, with many more watching digitally.
- 27. A marketing and communications campaign was devised and delivered in advance of the Show to promote it to key visitor, media, stakeholder, and internal audiences. This included: our most successful ever social media campaign which set new records across all metrics, placing the Show's poster in over 200 London Underground sites; delivering 220,000 Show leaflets across City and wider London community, cultural, hospitality, tourist, and transport hubs; and advertising in key London titles including City A.M., City Matters, and London Calling.

## Financial and Professional Services Dinner

- 28. Widespread coverage was achieved on the Financial and Professional Services Dinner at the Mansion House, with over 2,000 pieces across the UK and international media. Channel 4 News, Bloomberg Radio, and Times Radio interviewed the Lord Mayor of London where he called for further reforms to unleash growth.
- 29. ITV, Sky News, and the BBC live reported the event with the BBC interviewing the Lord Mayor on his Growth Unleashed theme. The dinner gained significant additional coverage due to the Governor's comments on the UK needing to "rebuild" its relationship with the EU to boost the economy.
- 30. Social media posts generated 8,490 engagements with a reach of 42,900 impressions.

## Lord Mayor's Banquet

- 31. Following a large-scale proactive communications plan, the Lord Mayor's Banquet was covered extensively by national and international media. During his keynote speech, the Prime Minister told guests that the UK will continue to back Ukraine while the Lord Mayor unveiled his Growth Unleashed theme and called on the government to support British businesses in leveraging their competitive edge. Coverage was achieved in over 1,000 media outlets including The Times, City A.M., Guardian, Daily Mail, Independent, Sky News, BBC News, and ITV News.
- 32. Social media posts generated 21,000 engagements with a reach of 92,800 impressions.

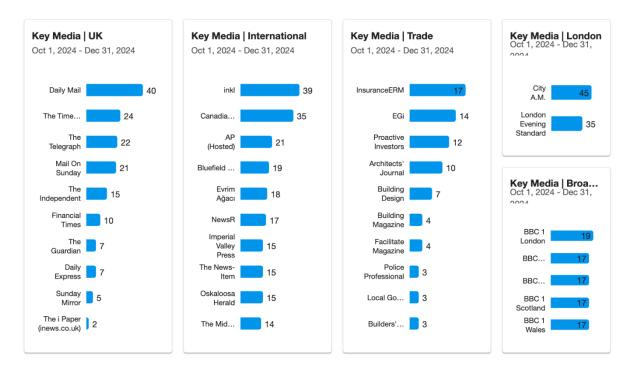
#### Markets

- 33. The decision to cease the market co-location programme taken by the Court of Common Council in November inevitably attracted a significant amount of media attention. Leaks ahead of the decision led to coverage ahead of Court about possible legal challenges in The Times.
- 34. Broadcast interviews immediately following the decision helped get across the City Corporation's focus on the future, with a growing recognition of the broader financial context and rationale for the decision. Most media coverage led on the historical and heritage aspects of the markets. While the overall sentiment in coverage was neutral, most outlets effectively conveyed our key messaging. In the days following the decision, a more proactive approach was taken to shape and present our narrative in the media.
- 35. Social media posts about the announcement generated a low 1,490 engagements with a reach of 17,900 impressions.
- 36. Since then, officers worked through Christmas to generate positive headlines and managed media at the Christmas Eve auction. Work was also undertaken to

ensure our updated narrative could be deployed in early January via the Policy Chairman's City A.M. oped ahead of the London Government Dinner.

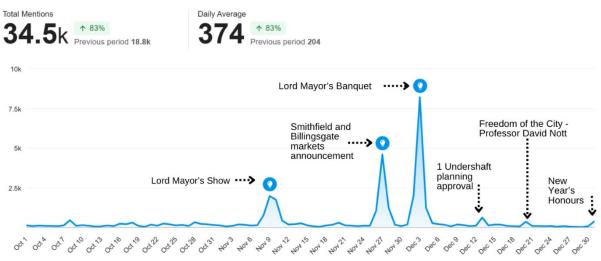
#### **Barbican Renewal**

37. The Court of Common Council approved £191m funding for the Barbican Renewal Programme one week after the markets' decision. A proactive approach was recommended and adopted leading to positive coverage, led by an exclusive story in the London Standard. Coverage was also achieved in City A.M., City Matters, and several arts, planning, and consumer trades. Social media posts generated 2,040 engagements with a reach of 30,020 impressions with more activity planned around the consultation.

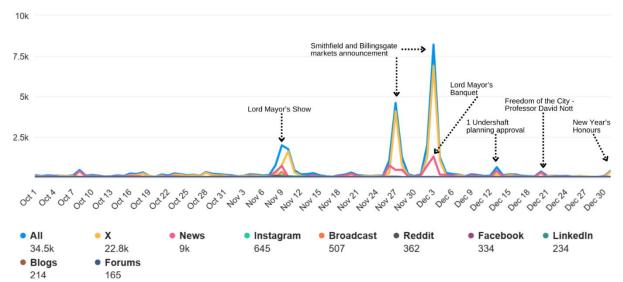


# Earned Coverage Breakdown

#### Spikes in mentions of the City of London Corporation



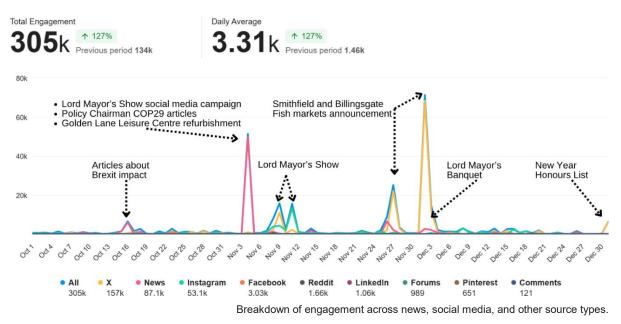
An overview of overall mentions across all media platforms, including social media. This includes total and average daily mentions, as well as the percentage change compared to the previous quarter. These AI-driven insights highlight statistically significant spikes in news and social media conversations



## Mentions across traditional media outlets and social media platforms

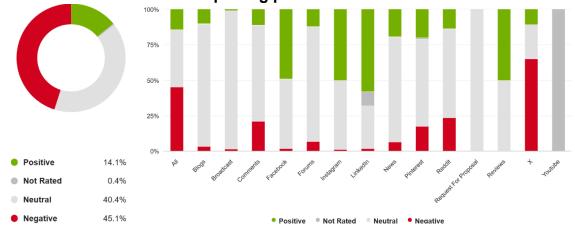
Breakdown of engagement across news, social media, and other source type

## Mentions with most engagements



## Sentiment analysis

- 38. **Negative sentiment** primarily expressed sadness regarding the closure of Smithfield Market. The remaining posts include a sizeable number of abusive comments confusing the Mayor of London and the Lord Mayor.
- 39. **Positive sentiment** featured praise of the Lord Mayor's Show and individuals receiving New Year Honours.
- 40. **Neutral sentiment** primarily focused on Smithfield Market, with mentions repeating our agreed lines for communicating the decision and future plans. The Lord Mayor's Show also features here with general comments about the day and things to do.



#### Overall sentiment for this reporting period

Sentiment is derived from Meltwater's natural language processing algorithm. "Not Rated" mentions lack sufficient text for sentiment analysis.

# **Digital Communications Impact Assessment**

41. Our digital offer achieved significant growth and strategic success across multiple platforms, demonstrating resilience and adaptability in a challenging digital landscape. The team delivered a 23% increase in content output, driving a 9% rise in engagement levels and expanding the total reach to 251,000 engagements and 2.93 million impressions. The follower base grew by 4%, reaching 198,000 across platforms.

# **Digital Communications Highlights**

# Lord Mayor's Show 2024

42. Our in-house social media campaign for the Show achieved unprecedented success, delivering exceptional results without any budget allocation. The strategic pre-event campaign, which highlighted various aspects of the Show, the Lord Mayor, and the City, generated record-breaking metrics: 37,300 engagements and 410,000 impressions, resulting in a 7.41% engagement rate. This is a significant increase from the previous year's record performance of 29,198 engagements and 217,915 impressions. Key highlights included media coverage of the State Coach exhibition and the Silent Ceremony, with the latter achieving a remarkable 9.01% engagement rate and generating 7,870 engagements across 108,000 impressions. The official image of the Lord Mayor outside the Great Hall proved particularly compelling for our audience.

# Planning application approvals – 60 Gracechurch, 1 Undershaft, 65 Fleet Street

43. Our announcements of major planning approvals (60 Gracechurch, 1 Undershaft, 65 Fleet Street) showed exceptional performance, achieving 68,800 engagements, and reaching 396,000 impressions, with an outstanding 11.36% engagement rate—more than double our platform average of 4.8%. This success can be attributed to our media team's strategic approach of crafting comprehensive posts across flagship channels, incorporating rich visual content and detailed information about public realm improvements and other notable highlights such as environmental measures. The positive tone of these posts has seen far fewer negative replies from when we kept the neutral and procedural tone necessary for processing applications for announcing successful ones.

# **Channel Metrics**

44. The Communications Team has significantly expanded our digital reach, with a 23% increase in content output driving a 9% rise in engagement levels. Our total reach encompassed 251,000 engagements and 2.93 million impressions, while our follower base expanded by 4% to 198,000.

# Key Performance Indicators:

45. Engagement Growth: The 23% increase in posting frequency, particularly on Instagram, yielded a 9% higher engagement rate and 15% more link clicks, totalling over 251,000 engagements and reaching 403,000+ users through 2.9 million impressions.

## Platform-Specific Growth:

- Instagram: 2,340 followers (41% growth)
- LinkedIn: 72,000 followers (9% growth)
- X: 110,000 followers (1% growth)
- Facebook: 13,800 followers (1% growth)
- YouTube: 9,620 followers (2% growth)

	Account		Posts	Video views	Post link clicks	Engagements	Engagement rate	Impressions	Net fans
1		City of London Corporation · Linkedin	449	152k	174k	207k	4.76%	1.67M	6.04k
2	*** ***	City of London Corporation: City View · Facebook	141	2.11k	380	21.1k	5.57%	323k	131
3		cityoflondon · Twitter	184	27.9k	1.86k	12k	1.72%	643k	917
4		City of London Corporation · Instagram	150	32.5k	0	5.76k	4.32%	106k	676
5	CTTP N	City of London Corporation · Youtube	113	9.34k	0	375	0.03%	9.34k	150

Cross channel metrics for this reporting period.

# Platform specific highlights

- 46. LinkedIn: Having replaced X as our main feed, LinkedIn generated 207,000 engagements, 174,000 link clicks, and 1.67 million impressions surpassing all other platforms combined. Our early adoption strategy and integrated departmental approach have validated the effectiveness of combined "super feeds" over dispersed topic-specific channels.
- 47. **Instagram**: We are beginning to see this feed breakthrough with a 41% increase in followers and nearly doubled quarterly engagement metrics, achieving a 4.32% engagement rate. Our community-focused content strategy continues to drive this positive trajectory.
- 48. X: The decline across all key metrics continues, mirroring trends seen across similar institutional accounts. Comparing January 2023 with 2024 shows a 57% decrease in engagements, 90% reduction in link clicks, and 66% fewer impressions. We're actively monitoring and supporting colleagues who are reporting a dramatic increase in challenging behaviour on X. We have reminded them of existing protocols for dealing with abuse.

#### Most engaged content

49.Leading content categories by engagement included the Lord Mayor's Show, planning approval announcements, Lord Mayor's Banquet, Financial Services Dinner, and the Chanukah reception.

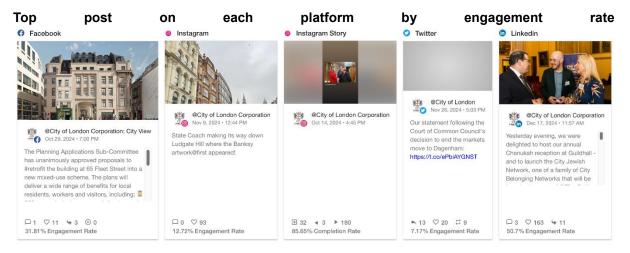
# Post highlights:

- 60 Gracechurch Street planning approval: 32,106 engagements on LinkedIn
- Lord Mayor's Show campaign: Peak single post achievement of 5,388 engagements within the campaign's total 37,000 engagements
- Lord Mayor's Banquet: Posts featuring photos of the Prime Minister and Lord Mayor meeting school children generated 21,000 engagements and a reach of 91,800 impressions.



#### **Platform-specific Engagement rates**

50. Top posts measured by the engagement rate percentage were identified across Facebook, Instagram, X and LinkedIn. This shows how content is landing with end users, regardless of how many followers a particular feed has, allowing us to gauge how well content is doing and update our plans accordingly.



# LinkedIn posts by engagement rate

©City of London Corporation Dec 17. 2024 • 11:57 AM Yesterday evening, we were delighted to host our annual Chanukah reception at Guildhall - and to launch the City Jewish Network, one of a family of City Belonging Networks that will be launched as part of @[The Rt Hon. the Lord Mayor Alastair King](urr.ll:person:BOGAiwnRa2)'s mayoral theme (hashtag]\#growthunleashed). The event featured speeches

□ 3 ♡ 163 ♀ 11 50.7% Engagement Rate @City of London Corporation
 Oct 1, 2024 10:40 AM
 Work in the City? Want to help shape its future? Request your
 vote for the upcoming City of London elections.

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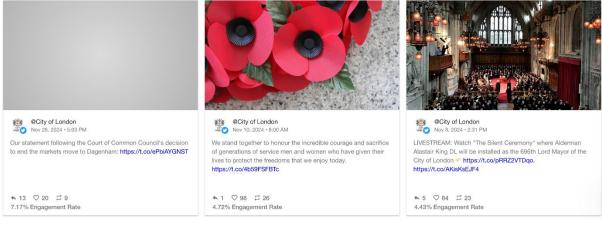
50.0% Engagement Rate

City of London Corporation

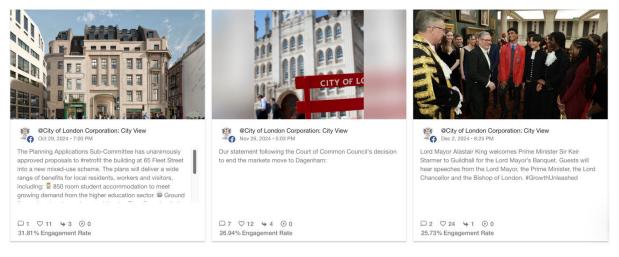
The City of London Corporation has developed a guide to getting authorised in the for international financial services firms. It is intended to help non-UK firms understand the UK financial services regime and gives practical guidance about how they can do business in the UK. Sign up now to receive your free copy of the full report.

□ 0 ♡ 0 ♀ 0 33.33% Engagement Rate

#### X posts by engagement rate



#### Facebook posts by engagement rate

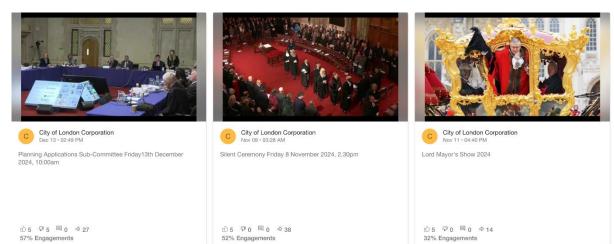


#### Instagram posts by engagement rate



□ 0 ♡ 93 12.72% Engagement Rate □ 2 ♥ 91 10.7% Engagement Rate □ 1 ♥ 65 10.53% Engagement Rate

# YouTube videos by engagement rate



# Annex D – Publishing (Internal Communications and Website)

## The People Strategy – and change communications

- 41. Strategic communications for internal audiences focused around key themes of The People Strategy. A key moment was the Town Clerk Live on 4 December where members of the Executive Leadership Board outlined the actions taken as a result of the staff survey. Chief People Officer, Ali Littlewood also provided a broad update on the strategy covering Ambition 25; Programme Sapphire (ERP); new training and development; and wellbeing such as our volunteering programme LEAP. The event was well attended with 150 people joining in person and 800 online, with 100 questions submitted by colleagues that will all be answered and published.
- 42. A campaign to promote submissions for the organisations staff award programme was successful in achieving nearly 400 submissions from across the organisation with a ceremony that will now take place in February 25.
- 43. The new Employee Engagement Network, comprising internal communications leads across our services and institutions continues to ensure alignment on key programmes with introductory sessions held in Nov/Dec to bring comms leads up to date on Programme Sapphire and ways of working to deliver the programme over the next 18 months.
- 44. Communications and engagement for stakeholders on Ambition 25 and Programme Sapphire (ERP) were prioritised during the period, with messaging development and planning for key phases in Q1 and Q2 in 2025.

#### Markets

45. Internal Communications played an essential role in communicating the decision taken by the Court of Common Council in November on the future direction of the Markets. Through collaboration with the project team and communication colleagues we ensured that Markets staff were informed first and that opportunities were arranged – through an in-person event with the Town Clerk – for staff to be heard. We continue to put an emphasis on supporting the programme and the Markets division through the development of new employee engagement and communication activities.

#### Engagement – new channels

46. We continue to embed new channels to raise awareness amongst our people on developments within the Corporate Plan and the scope of work carried out across the organisation. It has been pleasing to see the listenership of our new podcast, The CoLCast, continue to grow, with more than 400 full streams of the first two 15 minute episodes, securing deep engagement with our people. Produced entirely in-house, the channel is in its infancy and receiving positive endorsement from listeners, and we remain committed to growing its reach. The most recent featured the Town Clerk; our film team on revenue opportunities; and the 150 anniversary and community role of West Ham Park.

47. We held our second Fantastic Five Years Live session on the Climate Action Strategy – in which attendees were invited to become Climate Change Champions. We will continue to share opportunities for colleagues to understand areas of strategic importance in this way throughout 2025.

#### Content creation – in-house efficiencies

- 48. The central Internal Communication team have become increasingly skilled in content creation, effectively producing, editing and publishing a range of communication assets in-house. Assets created in the period include; creating audio tour videos for the Statues Project; a Health & Safety video and new intranet pages; and an introductory video for new project management process.
- 49. In addition, as we approached the end of the year, we created a video message from the Town Clerk that celebrated key milestones from the year that all relate to themes in the Corporate Plan. The video was viewed, in its entirety, nearly 500 times.

#### Website

- 50. The website team have continued working with DITS, Zengenti (website host) and the design agency on putting the Digital Strategy on the site. This is now at the stage of a first draft with content and will be circulated for approval shortly.
- 51. They have also collaborated with colleagues in creating additional content in response to the intense interest generated in the wholesale markets relocation issue. This meant initially finding a quick solution to direct users to the most helpful information. This was followed by the creation of three new pages dealing with contacts, news and the Bill to Parliament which deals with the ending of the City Corporation's responsibilities to operate a market at these sites.
- 52. There has also been a substantial amount of work done on the statues project in creating a dedicated section of the website. This has been regularly reviewed and updated, including receiving feedback from an external accessibility panel. This has now been presented to the Members of the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee at a workshop and will go to committee for approval in due course.

#### **Mark Gettleson**

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#### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

- 53. Strategic implications The majority of the work undertaken by the Corporate Affairs Team aligns with and supports the delivery of the Corporate Plan 2024-2029, particularly the Dynamic Economic Growth pillar.
- 54. Financial implications None
- 55. Resource implications None
- 56. Legal implications None
- 57. Risk implications None
- 58. Equalities implications Not applicable
- 59. Climate implications Not applicable
- 60. Security implications None