

City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee(s): Communications and Corporate Affairs (Policy & Resources) Sub Committee – For information	Dated: 09/05/2025
Subject: Parliamentary Team Update	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	Diverse Engaged Communities, Dynamic Economic Growth Leading Sustainable Environment Vibrant Thriving Destination Providing Excellent Services Flourishing Public Spaces
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

This summary updates Members on the main elements of the Parliamentary Team's previous and planned activity in support of the City of London Corporation's political and parliamentary engagement since the last formal update to the sub-committee on 5 February 2025.

Recommendation(s)

Members are recommended to note the report.

Main Report

Legislative Programme Update

1. Since the King's Speech on 17 July 2024, Sir Keir Starmer's government has advanced a robust legislative agenda comprising 39 Bills for the current parliamentary session. As of now, 24 Government Bills are active in Parliament, with eight having reached Royal Assent, including the Budget Responsibility Act, the Employment Rights Act, and the Finance Act.
2. Key measures introduced include the Great British Energy Bill, which paves the way for a publicly owned energy company and is now in its final stages. The Renters' Rights Bill, which implements enhanced tenant protections, is also currently in the final stages of the legislative process. The Passenger Railway Services (Public Ownership) Act has been enacted, marking a significant step in the government's efforts to renationalise the railways.

3. The **City of London (Markets) Bill** seeks to repeal existing legislation relating to Billingsgate Market and the London Central Markets, thus removing the City's legal involvement in those markets. The Parliamentary Team held a drop-in event in February for MPs and Peers to hear more about the Bill, following its Second Reading. This drop-in session gave the opportunity for Members of both Houses to talk to representatives of the City Corporation, as well as representatives of Smithfield and Billingsgate Traders, about the Traders' plans for the future to grow their businesses in new locations, the financial and practical support that the Corporation is giving to assist the Traders in those plans, and the proposals for the future uses of both the Smithfield and Billingsgate market sites. The Office is working to resolve a local issue that has resulted in a petition against the Bill. Close engagement with the parties continues and further discussions will take place, designed to resolve the points made in the petition.
4. **Employment Rights Bill** – The Bill covers a wide range of areas including reforms to rules regarding zero hours contracts, flexible working, statutory sick pay, family leave, protection from harassment, unfair dismissal, "fire and rehire" practices and trade unions. The Office is liaising with relevant colleagues in service departments regarding direct implications of the Bill on the Corporation. The Bill has now passed the Report Stage in the Commons and is currently at the Committee Stage in the House of Lords.
5. **Property (Digital Assets etc) Bill** – A Law Commission Bill, the measure aims to clarify that assets such as crypto-tokens, crypto-currency and non-fungible tokens could be capable of attracting property rights. The Bill, arising from Law Commission recommendations, contains only one substantive clause. The legislation hopes to provide more clarity in cases involving digital assets, including settlements, divorces, or disputed ownership. It is now at the Report Stage in the House of Lords.
6. **Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act** – The Bill received Royal Assent at the beginning of April. The new Act requires public premises where 200 or more individuals may be present, to be better prepared and have plans in place to keep people safe in the event of an attack. Larger premises and events where 800 or more people will be present will be required to take further steps to reduce their vulnerability to acts of terrorism – such as having CCTV, bag search policies or vehicle checks where appropriate. The implementation period for the Act is expected to last at least 24 months.
7. **The Crime and Policing Bill** has progressed from first reading to Committee stage. The Bill focuses on community policing and delivering higher policing standards by expanding the powers of HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services to intervene in failing police forces and introducing higher mandatory national vetting standards. The Bill will 'crackdown on anti-social behaviour' through new Respect Orders, fast-tracked Public Spaces Protection Orders and new powers to tackle anti-social use of off-road bikes. It will create a new specific offence of assaulting a shopworker and tackle low

level shoplifting. It will strengthen the law to tackle exploitation of children for criminal purposes and provide specialist responses to violence against women and girls. Of particular interest to City of London Police, the Bill also introduces new measures to Combat cyber-enabled fraud and the use of SIM farms.

8. Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill

The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill aims to 'remove barriers to opportunity for children and families' by strengthening multi-agency child protection and safeguarding arrangements, requiring free breakfast clubs in every primary school and limiting the costs of school uniforms and kits. It has now had its first reading in the House of Lords, and will bring in a number of new duties including on local authorities to have and maintain a Children Not in School register and a requirement for all schools to cooperate with the local authority on school admissions, SEND inclusion and place planning. Following a review of curriculum and assessment, all schools – including academies - will be required to teach the national curriculum and multi-academy trusts will be brought into the inspection system, as had also been proposed by the last government.

9. Planning and Infrastructure Bill

This Bill would make wide-ranging changes to development and the involvement of local planning authorities. It would enable local authorities to set planning fees and charges locally, and allow additional fees to be ring fenced for planning services. It would establish a national scheme of planning delegation and require mandatory training of planning committee members. The measures would make significant alterations to environmental protections. Environmental Delivery Plans are proposed as a new way to manage the environmental impact of development, Natural England or another designated body would create these plans, outlining the necessary mitigation for certain types and scales of development in specific areas, The bill also introduces a Nature Restoration Levy, which would require developers causing negative environmental impacts at a local level to pay into a centralised fund, The bill would reform rules on nationally significant infrastructure projects including requiring regular review of national policy statements and streamlined provision for updates. The Bill removes certain consultees from the statutory consultation process.

10. Data (Use and Access) Bill – The Bill is now at Report Stage in the Lords.

This Bill implements a range of changes to data rules, with provisions including:

- paving the way for the 'smart data' model, which requires data holders to provide access to customer and business data, to be used in more sectors
- establishing a trust framework for digital verification services
- placing the national underground asset register on a statutory footing
- enabling births and deaths to be registered electronically
- applying information standards to IT services within health and social care to make patients' data more easily transferrable across the NHS
- removing the requirement for police to log a justification each time they access someone's personal data

The International Regulatory Strategy Group (IRSG), a joint venture between TheCityUK and the City of London Corporation, put in a submission to the House of Commons Public Bill Committee's call for evidence. The adoption of digital verification was a recommendation of the *Vision for Economic Growth* report.

11. As reported in February, other Bills of particular interest to the Corporation that the Office continues to monitor include the **Arbitration Bill**; the **Bank Resolution (Recapitalisation) Bill** and the **Property (Digital Assets) Bill**.
12. Several Bills of minor interest continue to progress, including the **Product Regulation and Metrology Bill**, **Armed Forces Commissioner Bill**, and the **Tobacco and Vapes Bill**. The **Water (Special Measures) Act** received Royal Assent in April. Engagement with relevant committees and trade associations continues to ensure the Corporation remains informed of legislative developments.
13. Three new Private Members' bills have been brought forward to the House of Commons: the **New Homes (Solar Generation) Bill**, which has had its Second Reading, the **Firearms (3D Printing) Bill**, and the **Rivers, Streams and Lakes (Protected Status) Bill**, both of which are awaiting their Second Reading this month.

Forward Look and Engagement Update

14. Evidence has been submitted to a number of select committee inquiries, including:
 - The Business and Trade Committee's inquiries into Export Led- Growth and Industrial Strategy;
 - The Constitution Committee's inquiry into the rule of law;
 - The Culture, Media and Sport Committee inquiry into Protecting Built Heritage;
 - The Education Committee's inquiry into post-16 education;
 - The Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee's inquiry into animal and plant health – biosecurity at the border;
 - The Foreign Affairs Committee's inquiry into soft power;
 - The Social Mobility Policy Committee's inquiry into Social Mobility Policy; and
 - The Treasury Committee's inquiry into AI in Financial Services.
15. The APPG for Financial Markets and Services has held four events this year, with two more planned before the beginning of summer recess. The group is chaired by David Pinto-Duschinsky MP (Lab, Hendon), with Lauren Edwards MP (Lab, Rochester and Strood), Lord Sharpe of Epsom (Con) and Viscount Trenchard (Con) as officers. The Secretariat is provided by the APPG's Industry Advisory Group, made up of traders and wholesale market associations, and is administered by the City Corporation (through the Remembrancer's office). The APPG held a meeting on 26th February titled "Tackling Fraud and Economic

Crime,” where the City of London Police’s Commander Andrew Gould was a guest speaker. It convened again on 27th March to discuss the topic of pension reforms; Deputy Andrien Meyers spoke in his capacity as Chief Commercial Officer of London CIV, the investment pool for London-based local government pension schemes. The most recent session at the time of writing took place on the 22nd April, titled “Capital Markets: Creating a Retail Investment Culture in the UK.” Guest speakers were John Jones, Proposition Strategy Director, Private Bank and Wealth Management, Barclays; Rhiannon Price, Director Policy and Strategy, Capital Markets, Strategic Policy Group, Barclays, and David Raw, Managing Director, Commercial Finance, Barclays.

16. Continuing the City Corporation’s partnership with the Industry and Parliament Trust, which hosts parliamentary events, a recent event focussed on the City Corporation’s ‘Skylines Skills’ agenda and heard from Alderman Gowman. The event, which attracted a wide range of guests, was delivered through work with IG and Surveyors.
17. In April, the City Corporation joined with financial services trade associations to host a drop-in session in Parliament, designed to give politicians an opportunity to network and learn more about the sector. This was the first event of its kind and proved very popular with politicians. The Policy Chairman attended alongside the leaders of the associations and many senior sector representatives.
18. In collaboration with Innovation and Growth (IG), the City Corporation held a roundtable in partnership with ADS, with Minister for Defence Procurement, Maria Eagle MP, Luke Charters MP, Alex Baker MP, and members of the Financial Services and the Defence Sectors to discuss ways to support finance requirements in defence.
19. Peers were briefed ahead of a short debate on biodiversity and nature conservation. The briefing focused on the Corporation’s open spaces, with specific reference to its Biodiversity Action Plan and Nature Conservation and Resilience Strategy.
20. Wendy Morton MP was issued a briefing ahead of a Westminster Hall debate on the impact of fly tipping. The briefing focused on the frequency of fly tipping across the City Corporation’s open spaces and the costs association with removing fly tips.
21. A Memorandum detailing the work of ‘No Knives Better Lives,’ an outreach programme run from the Central Criminal Court (The Old Bailey) has been issued to a range of Parliamentarians interested in the prevention of knife crime in London, including Ben Obese-Jecty MP, Rachel Blake MP and The Lord Dubs ahead of debates on the subject. The programme runs events aimed at young people between the ages of 14 and 17, and seeks to educate them on the dangers and perils of carrying a knife.

22. As part of its engagement on the City of London Markets Bill, the team has had ongoing communications with Calvin Bailey MP, and is pursuing engagement with Meg Hillier MP, whose Hackney South and Shoreditch constituency covers the Ridley Road Market.

Appendix 1 - Excerpts from the Public Policy Bulletin issued alongside the King's Speech 2024 relating to Bills not yet brought forward.

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Appendix 1

New Bills

National Wealth Fund Bill [HM Treasury]

The Bill will put the much-trailed National Wealth Fund, which will make investments nationwide with the aim of delivering growth and a greener economy, on a statutory footing. The UK Infrastructure Bank and the British Business Bank will be aligned under the National Wealth Fund in order to simplify the support landscape for business and investors.

Pension Schemes Bill [Department for Work and Pensions]

The Bill, which is expected to be laid before Parliament before summer recess, aims to help those saving in private-sector pension schemes to get better outcomes from their pension assets and support the Government's mission to deliver growth. Its measures will facilitate the consolidation of Defined Contribution individual deferred small pension pots, establish a Value for Money framework for pension schemes, place duties on trustees of occupational pension schemes to offer a retirement income solution or range of solutions, including default investment options, to their members, consolidate the Defined Benefit market through commercial Superfunds, reaffirm the Pensions Ombudsman as a competent court so that pension schemes no longer need to apply to the courts to enforce its decisions in relation to the recovery of overpayments, and amend the Special Rules for End of Life (Pension Protection Fund and Financial Assistance Scheme (FAS)) extending the definition of 'terminal illness', allowing eligible members within the Pension Protection Fund and the Financial Assistance Scheme to receive a lump sum payment at an earlier stage.

English Devolution Bill [Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government]

The Bill is designed to establish a standardised framework for devolution in England, including powers over strategic planning, transport, skills and employment support. Local leaders will be empowered to produce Local Growth Plans and enabled to formally request additional powers, with the Government required to consider the request. A simpler process for creating new Combined and Combined County Authorities will be established, while local communities will be empowered with a 'right to buy' community assets, such as empty shops, pubs and community spaces.

Victims, Courts and Public Protection Bill [Ministry of Justice]

This Bill aims to deliver on the Government's promise "to put the needs of victims first." Its measures will seek to ensure that victims of crime and antisocial behaviour get the support they need, strengthen the powers of the Victims' Commissioner, require offenders to attend their sentencing hearings, reduce delays in the courts system by allowing Associate Prosecutors to work on appropriate cases, and give the public increased protections from sex offenders.

Hillsborough Law [Cabinet Office]

The Bill will place a legal duty of candour on public servants and authorities and address the 'unacceptable defensive culture' in the public sector, by improving transparency and accountability, improve assistance for bereaved persons and core

participants at inquests and public inquiries and provide legal aid for victims of disasters or state-related deaths.

Cyber Security and Resilience Bill [Department for Science, Innovation and Technology]

The Bill will update the existing UK regulations regarding cyber security, which reflect laws inherited from the EU. The Bill will update the regulatory framework to better protect digital services by expanding the remit of the regulations, put regulators on a stronger footing to ensure cyber safety measures are being implemented, and mandating increased incident reporting to give government better data on cyber attacks.

Draft Bills

Draft Audit Reform and Corporate Governance Bill [Department for Business and Trade]

The draft Audit Reform Bill will seek to strengthen audit and corporate governance by requiring greater transparency from large companies, enforced by a revamped regulator. The Bill aims to support long-term investment in UK companies, reduce the harm that financial reporting errors can do and help ensure quality audit for all businesses that need it. The Bill will replace the Financial Reporting Council with the Audit, Reporting and Governance Authority, with a wider remit, relaxed rules for smaller Public Interest Entities, powers to investigate and sanction company directors in relation to financial reporting and audit responsibilities, and a regime to oversee the audit market.

Draft Leasehold and Commonhold Reform Bill [Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government]

The draft Bill aims to enact the Law Commission recommendations to bolster leaseholders' fundamental rights to extend their lease and buy their freehold (enfranchisement) and take over the freeholders building management functions (Right to Manage). It will seek to modernise the legal framework for commonhold and restrict the sale of new leasehold flats. It will also seek to tackling ground rents for existing leaseholders, so they no longer face unregulated and unaffordable costs. The Government intends to publish a draft Leasehold and Commonhold Reform Bill in the second half of 2025.

Draft Equality (Race and Disability) Bill [Government Equalities Office]

The draft Bill aims to deliver on the Government's manifesto commitment to enshrine in law the full right to equal pay for ethnic minority and disabled people, and to introduce mandatory ethnicity and disability pay reporting.