

COMMUNICATIONS & CORPORATE AFFAIRS SUB (POLICY & RESOURCES)
COMMITTEE

Thursday, 29 May 2025

Minutes of the meeting of the Communications & Corporate Affairs Sub (Policy & Resources) Committee held at the Guildhall EC2 at 9.00 am

Present

Members:

Jason Groves (Chair)	Alderman Prem Goyal OBE
Deputy Christopher Hayward (Deputy Chairman)	Charles Edward Lord OBE JP
Deputy Emily Benn	Deborah Oliver
Tijs Broeke	Deputy James Thomson CBE
Deputy Peter Dunphy	James Tumbridge

Officers:

Mark Gettleson	- Corporate Strategy Department
Mark Mistry	- Corporate Strategy Department
Lisa Ward	- Corporate Strategy Department
Rob McNicol	- Environment Department
Miki Arenson	- Remembrancer's Department
Katie Foster	- Remembrancer's Department
Bruce Hunt	- Remembrancer's Department
Sam Hutchings	- Remembrancer's Department
Kristy Sandino	- Remembrancer's Department
Ben Dunleavy	- Town Clerk's Department
Richard Riley	- Town Clerk's Department

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Deputy Helen Fentimen, Alderman Timothy Hailes, Shravan Joshi and Alderwoman Sue Langley.

Karina Dostalova and Deputy Caroline Haines observed the meeting virtually.

The Chair took the opportunity to thank those Members no longer serving on the Sub-Committee, and welcome new Members.

2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations of interest.

3. APPOINTMENTS

Members proceeded to the appointment of four Members from the Court of Common Council to the Sub-Committee.

The Town Clerk informed the Sub-Committee that the following Members had submitted expressions of interest;

Karina Dostalova
Charles Edward Lord
Alderman Prem Goyal
Deputy Madush Gupta
Stephen Hodgson
Deborah Oliver
Gaby Robertshaw
Jacqui Webster

Following a ballot, Karina Dostalova, Charles Edward Lord, Alderman Prem Goyal and Deborah Oliver were appointed.

RESOLVED, that - Karina Dostalova, Charles Edward Lord, Alderman Prem Goyal and Deborah Oliver be appointed to the Sub-Committee for the year ensuing.

4. **ELECTION OF A DEPUTY CHAIR**

The Committee proceeded to elect a Deputy Chair in accordance with Standing Order 26.

Deputy Christopher Hayward, as the only Member expressing their willingness to serve, was duly elected as Deputy Chairman for the year ensuing.

RESOLVED, that - Deputy Christopher Hayward be elected Deputy Chairman of the Communications and Corporate Affairs Sub-Committee for the year ensuing.

5. **MINUTES**

The public minutes and summary of the meeting held on 5 February 2025 were approved as a correct record.

6. **OUTSTANDING REFERENCES**

Members received a report of the Town Clerk concerning outstanding actions of the Sub-Committee.

Officers provided an update on the Switching-off Light Campaign ('the Campaign'). The Campaign was being incorporated into the Climate Action Strategy (CAS), through which officers were developing mechanisms to deliver more sustainable outcomes for buildings in the Square Mile and promote good lighting standards in new developments.

The Deputy Chairman expressed his frustration that the Campaign, which had been on the Sub-Committee's outstanding references for several years, was now being dropped and asked if the Lighting Charter itself was being dropped as well. In reply, officers said they had received helpful feedback following engagement with stakeholders on the Lighting Charter, and felt incorporation into CAS presented a better way to promote lighting standards in the City. Following a question from the Deputy Chair, officers confirmed they would be reporting back to the Planning and Transportation for approval of this approach.

A Member asked for further information on the relationship between those City Corporation policies which discouraged lighting, and those which were used to promote major sites in the City, such as St Paul's Cathedral or Tower Bridge. In reply. In reply, officers acknowledged that there were many tensions involved in

lighting the City; the Lighting Strategy had been developed several years ago and sought to ensure that there was a more considered approach to lighting in the City as a whole, including aspects such as St Paul's Cathedral.

The Chair informed Members of the recruitment timetable for the new Executive Director of Communications & Engagement, with final panel interviews due to take place on 16 July 2025.

7. DRAFT HIGH-LEVEL BUSINESS PLAN 2025/26 – CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Members received a joint report of the Chief Strategy Officer and the City Remembrancer concerning business planning.

The Sub-Committee, noting that the Business Plan focused on ensuring a stable function during a transition period following the departure of the Executive Director of Communication, thanked the team for their work during an uncertain period. However, Members also agreed with the Deputy Chair who said that, while he thought the Plan was a good piece of work, he did not think it would be appropriate for the Policy & Resources Committee to approve a Business Plan shortly before the appointment of a new Executive. He would therefore be recommending that the decision be deferred when it was presented to that Committee.

A Member asked how responsibility for digital content and delivery could be harmonised, as they currently sat between different committees and officers. The Chair said that one reason for recruiting a Director of Communications at Chief Officer level was to address issues like this.

A Member asked that future iterations of the Plan address where responsibility for political engagement in the City Corporation should sit. Officers noted that the Corporate Affairs function currently reported into the City Remembrancer, working closely with Innovation & Growth. The Chair said that this demonstrated the need for collaboration across the City Corporation.

A Member asked that better signage in the City be considered as part of the branding work.

RESOLVED, that – the report be received and its contents noted.

8. SPORT ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

Members received a report of the City Remembrancer concerning the Sport Strategy.

The Sub-Committee commended the work of the Head of Sport Strategy and Engagement and the work delivered through the Sport Strategy. The Deputy Chair said he hoped the Sport Sounding Board's composition would be able to include anyone with a genuine interest in sport. A Member, who had served as the Lead Member for Sport, said that the composition aimed to balance out representation from relevant committees with those interested in sport.

It was noted that the Ticket Allocation Policy did not provide for Members of the Sounding Board, and Charles Edward Lord accordingly moved that it should be amended so that Members of the Sports Sounding Board were included alongside Sub-Committee Members at item 3 of the Policy's priority order. This was seconded by the Chair, and agreed by the Sub-Committee.

RESOLVED, that – Members:

- i) Note the sport engagement update outlined in this report; and
- ii) Endorse the current Ticket Allocation Policy for the City of London Corporation, updated to include Members of the Sport Sounding Board at item 3 of the priority order.

9. **CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS & EXTERNAL AFFAIRS UPDATE REPORT**

Members received a joint report of the Chief Strategy Officer and the City Remembrancer providing an update on the work of the Corporate Communications and External Affairs team.

The individual annexes in the report were introduced by the report authors and discussed by Members in turn, as follows:

- The Chair praised the work done on the Mansion House Accord, which had received substantial press coverage.
- A Member asked how the City Corporation was engaging with Reform. In reply, officers said that, as the City Corporation is apolitical, it aimed to engage with all parties. There were open conversations about a meeting with Reform, and the criteria for what activated wider officer and Member representation at political party conferences had been set out in a previous report to the Sub-Committee. The Deputy Chair said that, in his capacity as Policy Chairman, he had been approached for a meeting by Reform's leader. He emphasised the importance of engaging across the political spectrum, and encouraged officers to consider broadening how this was achieved in a new political landscape
- Members welcomed the achievements of the City Belonging project and discussed further ways in which the City Corporation could engage with the electorate. A Member asked for an update on plans to contact people who had expressed an interest to vote outside of the registration window once that window was open; officers undertook to follow this up with the Elections Office.
- Officers would review the metrics for measuring media relations.

RESOLVED, that – the report be received and its contents noted.

10. **PARLIAMENTARY TEAM UPDATE**

Members received a report of the City Remembrancer providing an update on parliamentary engagement.

At the request of Members, officers undertook to explore where relevant Members could contribute to the work of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Financial Markets and Services, noting that the City Corporation's only role was to provide secretarial support through the Remembrancer's department. Officers also undertook to share the forward look for meetings of the Industry and Parliament Trust.

A Member noted that the International Regulatory Strategy Group, partly supported by the City Corporation had entered a submission on the Data (Use

and Access) Bill but felt there were some deficiencies in the Group's understanding of the issues surrounding the Bill. The Member accordingly asked what oversight the City Corporation had of the work conducted by the bodies such as this that the City Corporation provided support for. In reply, the Chair noted that the City Corporation had representatives on the International Regulatory Strategy Group's governing bodies.

RESOLVED, that – the report be received and its contents noted.

11. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

There were no questions.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There was one item of further business.

12.1 Strategic Branding Review update

Members received a report of the Chief Strategy Officer concerning the Strategic Branding Review.

A Member agreed with the approach set out in the report, but sought assurance on observations they had made when proposals had been presented to the Court of Common Council in March 2025 that officers were not looking to change the corporate branding from *City of London* to *City of London Corporation*, which they felt would be a downgrade. In reply, officers said they felt there would still be some situations where *City of London Corporation* would be more appropriate but would retain *City of London* in terms of place. The Member replied that the *City of London* brand was well-established in several areas, and asked officers to carefully consider the impact any change would have.

A Member also requested that officers consider how to include brand protection measures as part of the Review.

RESOLVED, that – the report be received and its contents noted.

13. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED – that under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act or relate to functions of the Court of Common Council which are not subject to the provisions of Part VA and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

14. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

The non-public minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2025 were approved.

15. NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

There was one question in the non-public session.

16. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE SUB COMMITTEE AGREES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

There were two items considered in the non-public session.

17. **CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**

The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2025 were approved as a correct record.

18. **CONFIDENTIAL ITEM**

Members received a report of the Town Clerk concerning the City of London Police.

The meeting closed at 10.56

Chairman

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