

Committee(s): Policy and Resources – For Information General Purposes Committee – For Information Communications & Corporate Affairs Sub Committee – For Information	Dated: 29 January 2026 3 February 2026 15 April 2026
Subject: Support for UK-based Financial and Professional Service - Innovation and Growth Quarterly Report	Public report: For Information
This proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes	Dynamic Economic Growth
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
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 report presents the impact of the City of London Corporation's (CoLC) work in support of UK-based Financial and Professional Services (FPS) between October 2025 and December 2025. It gives Members of the Committee visibility of the outcomes of workstreams in the last quarter in the Innovation and Growth (IG) Department, working in close collaboration with Corporate Affairs, Media, the Remembrancer's Office, the Office of the Policy Chairman and Mansion House.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the update on key pieces of work that have taken place between October 2025 and December 2025 and their outputs.

Main Report

Background

1. CoLC, through IG working closely with Corporate Affairs, Media, the Remembrancer's Office, the Office of the Policy Chairman and Mansion House, works to strengthen the UK's FPS creating jobs and growth right across the UK. Our programmes in this area support the Corporate Plan 24-29 objective to deliver Dynamic Economic Growth, the recommendations in the Corporation's Vision for Economic Growth Report and are aligned to the Corporation's Competitiveness Strategy 2021-25.
2. As previously agreed by Policy and Resources Committee (P&R), IG will provide quarterly updates on key pieces of work. This report updates Members on the period between October 2025 to December 2025.
3. As part of IG's work, the department operates several overseas offices and has expanded its overseas presence throughout the last decades to provide in-market intelligence, expertise and facilitate our work to promote the Financial and Professional Services Sector in line with the objectives of our competitiveness strategy in the following locations:
 - Belgium: Brussels
 - China: Beijing and Shanghai
 - India: Mumbai
 - United States of America (US)

Current Position

4. CoLC has carried out a wide range of activity between October 2025 and December 2025, across the key areas of our 2025/2026 business plan. Updates on key initiatives and workstreams are provided from paragraphs 8 to 44.
5. These support the objectives laid out in the IG Business Plan. They are:
 - Open & Global – ensuring that UK is a global gateway for FPS business.
 - Sustainable Finance – positioning the UK as a one-stop shop; the go-to partner for countries and companies, looking for capital and expertise, to help them meet their sustainability goals.
 - Innovation in technology – ensuring that UK FPS and our financial system is recognised as globally leading in technology.
6. Furthermore, IG's work in this area drives into three key policy outcomes:
 - Raising investment levels to create jobs.
 - Become a hub for sustainable finance.
 - Secure growth through a digital economy.
7. IG's macro-economic outcomes are measured through the KPIs in the departmental annual business plan. These macro-economic KPIs are measured and reported on an annual basis through the benchmarking report published in January each year.

Open and Global

8. October saw the new investment hub, known as the Office for Investment: Financial Services (OfI:FS) announced by the Chancellor. This initiative has been driven by the Policy Chairman since the publication of the landmark Vision for Economic Growth report two years ago and he is now chairing the Government's Advisory Committee supporting this. The OfI:FS team have started work and are based both in Guildhall and in Westminster.
9. The Lord Mayor attended the Government's Regional Investment Summit at Edgbaston, Birmingham, where he formally launched the 'Sterling20' group alongside the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Sterling20 is a new group of UK pension funds, made up of the seventeen Mansion House Accord signatories and three bulk annuity providers, co-chaired by HMG and the Corporation. It will coordinate investment into regional infrastructure and growth sectors such as AI and fintech.
10. The Lord Mayor visited Edinburgh in October for a series of engagements leading up to and including Scotland's Global Investment Summit. A pioneering event spearheaded by the Lord Mayor and Scottish Financial Enterprise, with support from both the UK and Scottish Government.
11. The Lord Mayor hosted the annual City Regulators Dinner in October, bringing together key stakeholders from across the City's financial services industry. The Lord Mayor used his speech to recognise progress made over the last year, but also to call for greater confidence and calculated risk taking on the part of British business.
12. The Policy Chairman visited Washington DC and held meetings with firms with significant transatlantic presence, digital asset firms, and trade associations. The visit coincided with the launch of a new position paper from the British American Finance Alliance (BAFA). The Policy Chairman is co-chair of BAFA. The Policy Chairman spoke at a financial services reception with Chargé d'Affaires to the US, James Roscoe. They discussed opportunities from the new US-UK Transatlantic Taskforce for Markets of the Future. This initiative followed President Trump's recent State Visit to the UK.
13. Following the release of the latest ONS trade data, our annual infographic "Exporting Financial Services to the World" was published in November. In 2024, the UK remained the world's largest net exporter of financial services, ahead of the US and Singapore. FS exports generated a £92.6bn trade surplus, half of the UK's total services surplus, with exports hitting a record £122.7bn.
14. In December, we released a scorecard showing our progress two years on from the launch of Vision for Economic Growth, spearheaded by the Policy Chairman (see Appendix – Vision for Economic Growth – Two years on). Focusing on the nine big moves to unlock £225bn of investment by 2030 to boost the UK's growth. This year has been a seen substantial progress, with the delivery of key initiatives. These include the OfI:FS, the Mansion House Accord and the Transition Finance Council to drive investment.
15. The Lord Mayor co-chaired in the third UK-Saudi Arabia Sustainable Infrastructure Assembly in Riyadh alongside HE Khalid bin Abdulaziz Al-Falih, Saudi Minister of Investment, held during the Future Investment Initiative (FII) conference. The Assembly is a partnership between CoLC,

Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Investment, and the UK Department for Business and Trade. It was established earlier this year. Its purpose is to bring together top UK and Saudi firms, policymakers, and industry leaders. The goal is to foster collaboration and unlock commercial opportunities. It signals a strategic shift in Saudi Arabia's economic landscape, from predominantly public-sector-led funding to greater private-sector engagement.

16. The Chancellor, Rachel Reeves, has welcomed a major commitment from leading UK FPS firms to invest in Saudi Arabia's sustainable infrastructure, marking a significant milestone in the Kingdom's economic transformation.
17. The Lady Mayor travelled to Amsterdam for the HMG Institutional Investors Lunch in November, which gathered 12 largest Dutch investors representing £1.8 trillion of assets. She re-enforced Ambassador's message of UK openness and opportunities that Mansion House Accord, Sterling-20 and OFI:FS represent for international capital.

Sustainable finance

18. The Transition Finance Council launched an international consultation on its draft Transition Finance Guidelines at COP30. It began outreach to global stakeholders to encourage collaboration and interoperability of transition finance frameworks. The long-term goal is to scale transition finance internationally. The consultation is estimated to close in spring 2026 and both HMT and DESNZ have aided leverage their respective official, regulatory dialogues to further promote the Guidelines consultation.
19. The Corporation participated COP30 in Belem, Brazil and showcased UK leadership in sustainable finance through a series of high-impact engagements. Highlights included the Transition Finance Roundtable and Reception co-hosted by EY. These events advanced global dialogue on scaling transition finance and launched consultation on the Council's draft Guidelines. There was also a panel on nature and insurance in climate finance, showing UK expertise in managing transition risk. Additionally, a UNFCCC side event with the Commonwealth focused on inclusive climate finance.

Innovation in technology

20. In November, we delivered the Lord Mayor's Quantum Hackathon, which marked a significant milestone in the UK's journey toward quantum-enabled financial services. By fostering collaboration between academia, industry, and government, the event showcased the potential of quantum computing to address complex financial challenges and drive innovation. Focus areas included portfolio optimisation & risk, market simulation, fraud detection, and post-trade innovation, using IBM simulators, Qiskit quantum hardware, and mentoring. Four teams progressed to the final from 15 total teams. An expert judging panel selected the winning team WarwiQC, for their project on AI-assisted quantum portfolio optimisation. Celebratory remarks were delivered by Dr Nicola Hodson, Chair of IBM UK, and Alderman Bronek Masojada.
21. The Corporation's Women Pivoting to Digital Taskforce launched its webinar series. The series explores skills-based hiring, highlighting how transferable skills can be overlooked through traditional recruitment filters, and offers practical guidance for HR teams, hiring managers, and

tech departments on creating inclusive workplaces. The webinars feature experts from Aviva, Brave Starts, the Financial Services Skills Commission, Finastra, and Opencast, who share insights, advice, and real-world examples of recognising and developing talent in digital teams. Highlighting these diverse perspectives helps employers understand the benefits of skills-based hiring and build resilient, future-ready digital teams. The series also supports the upcoming launch of the State of the UK's Digital Talent Pipeline Report, which reveals the scale and cost of digital talent shortages and sets out solutions for closing the gap.

22. The Regtech Strategy Group held its inaugural meeting in October at Guildhall. The next meeting is scheduled for January at Guildhall where the Group will discuss its upcoming projects. The RegTech Strategy Group convenes C-suite representatives from HM Treasury, the FCA, PRA, major banks, RegTech and FinTech firms, universities and regional clusters.
23. In October CoLC hosted the biannual Anglo-Irish dialogue at Mansion House with attendees from Irish and British industry and regulators. At this roundtable discussion a session was dedicated to developments and applications of AI, broadly in the context of asset management. During this session we heard from the Investment Association, before also hearing directly from the FCA on their sandbox work looking at use cases and engagement with industry. The session prompted open discussion on future cooperation in this space, including the merits of a global approach. The next session for the dialogue is scheduled for April 2026 and continuing the theme of technological developments has proposed to look at developments in the digital asset space.
24. The Brussels office took part in the British Chamber of Commerce's Economic Security and Competitiveness Programme, providing input to the initiative's cyber and technological security pillar. At the end of November, the Chamber released its report, with several CoLC advocacy points and recommendations included. The report will be the subject of an Economic Security and Competitiveness summit in the first quarter of 2026.
25. The International Regulatory Strategy Group (IRSG) Digital Assets Sub-Group responded to the FCA consultation paper 25/25 Application of FCA Handbook for Regulated Cryptoasset Activities. The response supports the FCA's approach and handbook principles. Bank of England published a consultation on stablecoin regulation. IRSG will respond to the consultation by 10 February 2026.

Overseas Office

Brussels

26. The Brussels office visited Nicosia in October ahead of Cyprus' upcoming EU Council presidency. The delegation met with key government officials, regulators, and financial services industry stakeholders. They also attended a reception hosted by UK High Commissioner to Cyprus bringing together leading figures from Cyprus' financial services sector.
27. In November, the Policy Chairman visited Brussels for high level meetings with Members of the European Parliament, the Mission of Switzerland to the EU and the Mission of the UK to the EU.

28. At the end of November, the Managing Director of the Brussels office travelled to Ireland, alongside the Policy Chairman for a series of political and industry meetings in Dublin. The visit included a productive roundtable and dinner on Climate Finance Week Ireland. The visit was a valuable opportunity to speak directly with stakeholders within the Irish Ministry of Finance to position the City as an essential partner in tackling pan-European challenges ahead of Ireland taking on the EU council presidency in 2026.
29. The Managing Director of the Brussels office attended the German State Banquet for Germany's President Frank-Walter Steinmeier in December. The event was hosted by the Lady Mayor.

India

30. The Policy Chairman joined the Prime Minister's trade delegation to Mumbai in October, accompanied by prominent business leaders. Prime Minister Modi actively engaged with the group during events such as the Global Fintech Fest and the relaunch of the UK-India CEO Forum. At the end of November, the first SteerCo meeting of the second phase of the UK-India Infrastructure Financing Bridge focused on identifying and engaging potential investors. This visit reaffirmed the strength of the UK-India partnership following the recent Free Trade Agreement, highlighting ongoing opportunities for collaboration and sustainable growth in financial and professional services.

China

31. Sir Charles Bowman attended bi-annual GFT workstream sessions in Shanghai, co-chairing with Dr Ma Jun. A series of seminars were held focused on carbon markets, transition finance, and nature & biodiversity. The workstreams are now fully established and are working on initiatives to help engage China on the UK's transitional finance guidelines, identify incentives to mobilise capital in hard-to-abate sectors, and developing effective nature-based solutions. Workstreams are working towards policy and product recommendations to be included at the next Economic and Financial Dialogue in the second quarter of 2026.
32. The Corporation joined the financial services panel at the Greater Bay Area (GBA) Conference in Shenzhen, organised by the China-Britain Business Council (CBBC). This positioned the UK financial sector as a trusted partner and raised CoLC's profile across southern China. The visit included key meetings with regional governments and leading financial services firms in southern China. IG are following up on new FDI leads and actively exploring a potential future green RMB bond listing in London with municipal governments.
33. The Lady Mayor attended the Bank of China's market opening ceremony at LSE, celebrating the issuance of the first dual currency (GBP/RMB) sustainable bond in London. This milestone underscores Bank of China's leadership in sustainable finance and deepens UK-China financial cooperation. The proceeds will support green credit projects aligned with China's carbon neutrality goals, and the event highlighted London's role as a global green finance centre.
34. The City of London welcomed Sichuan Financial Holdings Group's second bond listing in London during a closing of the market ceremony at LSEG. The \$80 million three-year offshore

green bond was issued on behalf of Sichuan Xinyao, achieving the first dual-listing on the LSE and the China (Macao) Financial Asset Exchange.

35. We have published a map showcasing Chinese Financial and Professional Services Firms in the City of London. This milestone celebrates the presence of over 50 Chinese institutions that have established operations in the City. Their expansion underscores the growing international reach of Chinese firms and their integration into the UK's financial ecosystem.

US Office

36. Following a member-led recruitment process, we have appointed a new US Managing Director who will commence on 19th January 2026. All necessary insurance policies have been secured to enable CoLC operations in the US, and a US bank account has been established with First Citizens Bank.
37. Contracts have been finalized with Landrum HR, a Professional Employment Organisation (PEO), to support HR operations in the US. Agreements have also been signed with Convene for office space in Washington, DC, providing a base of operations for the new US Managing Director.

Next steps

38. We will be supporting the Policy Chairman and Lady Mayor at Davos in January and the Lady Mayor's visits to the Gulf, North America, China and Hong Kong. We will also be supporting the Policy Chairman during visits to Brussels, Belfast and Japan.
39. Our Brussels team will be hosting the Annual Brussels Reception in January. This is a prominent networking event for over 100 senior guests from EU institutions, member states, third countries, and the FPS sector. The reception underscores the UK and City of London's commitment to strengthening EU-UK relations and collaborating on shared fundamental economic challenges.
40. We will be launching the sixth edition of the annual Benchmarking report in January. The benchmarking analysis uses more than 100 metrics to measure UK FS competitiveness against six other global financial centres. Our key international competitors are New York, Singapore, Tokyo, Hong Kong, Paris and Frankfurt.
41. We will be launching the State of the UK's Digital Talent Pipeline Report at the Accenture offices in February. The report will have input from the Women Pivoting to Digital taskforce and will reveal the scale and cost of digital talent shortages and sets out solutions for closing the gap, including reskilling staff and bringing women from non-traditional backgrounds into digital roles.
42. Sterling 20 will keep focusing on deploying capital and surfacing UK infrastructure, housing, venture, and growth investments. The ambition is to convert these opportunities into live allocations for long-term impact. If the Pension Schemes Bill passes, we expect to welcome six LGPS Pools to Sterling 20. Together, these pools steward over £400bn of UK institutional capital for long-term investment.

Corporate and departmental Risk

43. IG continues to review departmental risks to ensure robust mitigating actions remain in place.
44. The revised Corporate Risk, CR02, was approved at CORMG in October, and its risk appetite was confirmed at the December P&R meeting.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

45. Strategic implications – the activity outlined in this paper supports the Corporate Plan and deliver against the Corporation's Competitiveness strategy. Officers are aware that regular reports may in future be required against the high-level business plan and the Corporate Plan. Officers will ensure that papers such as this align with that process.
46. Financial implications – all financial implications are considered as part of IG's departmental business planning and project planning processes.
47. Resource implications – all resource implications are considered as part of the project planning process.
48. Legal implications – none identified this paper.
49. Risk implications – all risk implications are considered as part of the project planning process and subsequent monitoring.
50. Equalities implications – none identified for this paper.
51. Climate implications – Officers recognise that international and, to a lesser extent, domestic travel have climate implications. These are considered as part of the Corporation's wider commitment to climate action.
52. Security implications – none identified for this paper.
53. Health Implications – none identified for this paper.

Conclusion

54. This paper is the second of the quarterly cycle of reports outlining the activity of the City of London Corporation's work to support the competitiveness of the UK as a global financial and professional services centre. This work is led by IG working with Corporate Affairs, Media, the Remembrancer's Office, the Office of the Policy Chairman and Mansion House.

Appendix

- Appendix - Vision for Economic Growth - Two years on

Background Papers

- P&R Innovation and Growth FPS Quarterly Report – September 2025 submitted to Policy and Resources on 16 October 2025.

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