

Committee: Policy and Resources	Date(s): 10 October 2013	Item no.
Subject: Centre for London: Core Funding		
Report of: Director of Public Relations	Public For Decision	
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Summary</u></p> <p>The Centre for London is a politically independent, not-for-profit think tank; it was established in 2011 with the assistance of £25,000 of start-up funding from the City Corporation. The Centre for London focusses on the big policy challenges facing London; its objective is to help London become a fairer, more prosperous and sustainable city – in so doing, the Centre has established a high media profile and is recognised as having made significant contributions to London policy debates</p> <p>The Centre received in 2011 start-up assistance of £25,000 from the City of London Corporation. The Centre was originally incubated by Demos but funding from the City of London Corporation helped the Centre to expand its activities and become independent of Demos. The Centre is now seeking additional financial support – of £20,000 per annum for a maximum of two years – to further establish itself as a pillar of London policymaking through an expansion of its research and activities. In return for sponsorship, the City Corporation would receive branding on the Centre for London’s new website, opportunities to host events with the Centre, and access through the Centre’s activities to their key stakeholders.</p> <p>The relationships with this key think tank will allow for high level interaction with a number of the City of London Corporation’s key audiences, as outlined in the <i>Communications Strategy 2013-16</i>, as well as the City of London Corporation’s economic development programme, as outlined in <i>The City Together Strategy: The Heart of a World Class City 2008-2014</i>.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Recommendation</u></p> <p>This report recommends that your Committee agree to sponsorship of the Centre for London for a maximum of two years at a cost of £20,000 per year to be met from your Committee’s <i>Policy Initiatives Funds for 2013/14 and 2014/15</i> categorised under the <i>Research</i> section of the <i>Fund</i> and charged to City’s Cash.</p>		

Background

1. The Centre for London is a politically independent, not-for-profit think tank; it was established as an independent entity in 2011 with the assistance of £25,000 of start-up funding from the City Corporation. The Centre was originally incubated by Demos but funding from the City of London Corporation helped the Centre to expand its activities and become independent of Demos. The Centre for London focusses on the big policy challenges facing London; its objective is to help London become a fairer, more prosperous and sustainable city, by building on its long, distinguished history as a centre of economic, social and intellectual innovation and exchange.
2. Through its research and events, the Centre is uniquely placed to act as a ‘critical friend’ to London’s leaders and policymakers, by promoting a wider understanding of the challenges facing London and developing long term, rigorous policy solutions for the capital. In so doing, the Centre has established a high media profile and is recognised as having made significant contributions to London policy debates, especially through its well-attended annual conferences; the Centre has also developed good relations with the capital’s political, business and third sector leaders, as well as academic institutions and experts. Research highlights have included well-received reports on housing, Tech City and the future for London’s transport infrastructure.
3. The Centre is made up of a core team led by Ben Rogers, its director, and Jess Tyrell, its deputy director, with support from freelance researchers as required; the Centre for London’s Advisory Board is chaired by Liz Meek (the former director of the Government Office for London) – its members include the Policy Chairman, former Policy Chairman Michael Cassidy, James Crabtree (Financial Times), and Shaks Ghosh (Chief Executive of the Private Equity Foundation). The Centre has partnered with and secured finance from a diverse range of financial institutions and businesses including BT, PwC, KPMG, Nomura, JP Morgan, Cisco, Thames Water, McKinsey, Serco, Capgemini, Qatari Diar Delancey, and the BVCA.

Proposal

4. The Centre for London is seeking £20,000 of core funding for two years from the City of London Corporation; this funding will enable the Centre to further establish itself and expand its activities. In return for sponsorship the City Corporation will receive three things: branding on the Centre for London’s new website; opportunities to host events with

the Centre; and access to its key stakeholders through the Centre's events and research.

5. The other sources contributing to the Centre for London's core funding are the organisations and firms to which paragraph 3 refers; the Centre for London will not reveal the exact contribution level of these bodies but the Centre's overall annual budget amounts to some £300,000.
6. The work of the Centre for London accords well with the role of the City Corporation in promoting debate on key policy issues that affect the City and London. The relationships with this think tank allows for high level interaction with a number of the City Corporation's key audiences and stakeholders, as outlined in the *Communications Strategy 2013-2016*. In addition, the Centre's research and events align with the City Corporation's strategy of using its resources to support London's communities, especially in neighbouring boroughs, and its wider economic development priorities as outlined in *The City Together Strategy: The Heart of a World Class City 2008-2014*.
7. This report recommends sponsorship of the Centre for London for two years at a cost of £20,000 per annum (£40,000 in total) to be met from your Committee's *Policy Initiatives Funds* for 2013/14 and 2014/15 categorised under the *Research* section of the *Fund* and charged to City's Cash.

Financial Implications

8. Although sponsorship is also being acquired from other sources for this initiative, the contribution from the City Corporation will form an important part of the overall funding package. It is proposed that the required funding of £20,000 per annum for a maximum of two years is drawn from your *Policy Initiatives Fund 2013/14* and *2014/15*, categorised under the *Research* section of the *Fund* and charged to City's Cash.
9. The current uncommitted balance available within your Committee's *Policy Initiatives Fund* for 2013/14 amounts to some £342,000 and for 2014/15 amounts to some £512,000, prior to any allowance being made for any other proposals on today's agenda.

Conclusion

10. The work of the Centre for London accords well with the role of the City Corporation in promoting debate on key policy issues that affect the City and London. The relationships with this think tank allows for high level interaction with a number of the City Corporation's key audiences and

stakeholders, as outlined in the *Communications Strategy 2013-2016*. In addition, the Centre's research and events aligns with the City Corporation's strategy of using its resources to support London's communities, especially in neighbouring boroughs, and its wider economic development priorities as outlined in *The City Together Strategy: The Heart of a World Class City 2008-2014*.

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