

Committee: Policy and Resources	Date(s): 10 October 2013	Item no.
Subject: Local Government Information Unit (LGiU): Corporate Subscription for Members and Officers		
Report of: Director of Public Relations	Public For Decision	
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Summary</u></p> <p>The Local Government Information Unit (LGiU) is the self-described ‘local democracy think tank’; it is an award-winning think tank and council membership organisation whose mission is to strengthen local democracy.</p> <p>The LGiU is proposing a two-year partnership, running for the rest of 2013 through to the end of 2015, at a total cost of £20,000. This subscription would include annual access to approximately 360 Daily News updates, 250 policy briefings, 10-15 policy reports, informal onsite briefings on policy reports, invitations to events and discounted access to LGiU learning and development support.</p> <p>Subscription to the LGiU will allow Members to receive high-quality information and research from experts about issues affecting local government in boroughs in London and across the UK; this accords well with the Corporation’s economic development priorities, specifically to support London’s communities, and will also allow for high-level interaction with a number of the City of London Corporation’s key audiences, as outlined in the <i>Communications Strategy 2013-2016</i>.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Recommendation</u></p> <p>This report recommends that the City of London Corporation supports Local Government Information Unit at a cost of £10,000 per annum funded from your Committee’s <i>Policy Initiatives Fund 2013/14</i> and <i>2014/2015</i>, categorised under <i>Research</i> section of the <i>Fund</i> and charged to <i>City’s Cash</i>.</p>		

Background

1. The Local Government Information Unit (LGiU) is the self-described ‘local democracy think tank’; it is an award-winning think tank and membership organisation whose mission is to strengthen local democracy in order to place citizens in control of their own lives, communities and local services. LGiU is

a registered charity run by councils for the benefit of councils; approximately 200 councils comprise the LGiU membership network.

2. LGiU's team of policy experts – led by chief executive, Dr Jonathan Carr-West, and the LGiU Partnerships Lead, Chris Naylor – provides practical policy advice, learning and development programmes, events and conferences, consultancy and other resources to its members, as well as other organisations. LGiU supports local councils, communities, civil society, business and government to share knowledge and ideas, and to create new thinking and innovation, particularly in the areas of health and social care, enhancing educational opportunity, and creating prosperous and sustainable places.
3. The LGiU membership includes Bristol City Council; Cambridge City Council; the London Boroughs of Greenwich, Hackney, Haringey, Harrow, Hounslow, Islington, Lambeth, and Merton; Manchester City Council; Sunderland City Council; and Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council

Proposal

4. LGiU are proposing a two year subscription, running for the remainder of 2013, and the entirety of 2014 and 2015, at a cost of £10,000 per annum – that is, £20,000 in total. The LGiU subscription level is determined through a formula based on the size of the local authority in question, as well as the number of Members and officers to be subscribed to receive the e-mail content; this produces annual subscription fees ranging from £5,000-25,000.
5. Subscription to LGiU would include annual access to approximately 360 Daily News updates, 250 policy briefings, 10-15 policy reports, informal onsite briefings on policy reports, invitations to events and discounted access to LGiU learning and development support. In addition, subscribing authorities have the option of joining in with the governance of LGiU, specifically through the 'Members Assembly' and/or election to the Executive Board, both of which oversee strategy and programme development.
6. All Members will receive a subscription to these services, as will key officers across all of the City of London Corporation's departments. The Daily News and Policy Briefing services will allow Members to receive high-quality information from experts about issues affecting local government in London and across the UK; this relationship accords well with the Corporation's economic development priorities, specifically to support London's communities. In addition, the services provided by LGiU, and the formation of a substantive relationship between the think tank and the City of London Corporation, will allow for high-level interaction with a number of the City of London Corporation's key audiences, as outlined in the *Communications Strategy 2013-2016*.

Financial and Risk Implications

7. It is proposed that the required funding of £10,000 per annum 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*.
8. 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

9. Subscription to the Local Government Information Unit (LGiU) will allow Members to receive high-quality information and research from experts about issues affecting local government in boroughs in London and across the UK; this accords well with the Corporation's economic development priorities, specifically to support London's communities. In addition, the services provided by LGiU, and the formation of a substantive relationship between the think tank and the City of London Corporation, will allow for high-level interaction with a number of the City of London Corporation's key audiences, as outlined in the *Communications Strategy 2013-2016*.

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