

Committee: Policy and Resources	Date: 10 October 2013
Subject: London First Aviation Campaign, <i>Let Britain Fly</i> : City of London Corporation Sponsorship Proposal	
Report of: Director of Public Relations	For Decision
<p><u>Summary</u></p> <p>London First is launching a campaign group – <i>Let Britain Fly</i> – which aims to increase air capacity in London and the South East by creating a commitment across the manifestos of all the main political parties to do so at the 2015 General Election. London First is funding the campaign’s secretariat and providing it with office facilities. However, London First is seeking to raise an additional £250,000 in £25,000 increments from interested stakeholders in the private, public and tertiary sectors to enable the campaign to achieve maximum impact with the relevant stakeholders in the political parties. This additional funding will cover the costs associated with furnishing the campaign with new research and analysis, as well as promotional activities and other special events.</p> <p>By providing <i>Let Britain Fly</i> with £25,000 to support its campaign, the City Corporation would continue to promote and contribute to a debates on a key policy issue affecting the competitiveness of the City of London and its wider communities; supporting the campaign would place the City of London Corporation at the heart of the debate on this increasingly vital issue. In return for this sponsorship, the City of London Corporation would be able to nominate a representative to sit on the campaign’s operating guidance group; in addition, those organisations contributing to <i>Let Britain Fly</i> will also be invited to nominate a representative to participate in a prominent group of senior business people supporting the campaign.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Recommendation</u></p> <p>This report recommends one-off financial support of £25,000 for the <i>Let Britain Fly</i> campaign to be met from your Committee’s <i>Policy Initiatives Fund</i> for 2013/14 categorised under the Research section of the <i>Fund</i> and charged to City’s Cash.</p>	

Main Report

Background

1. London First is launching a campaign group – *Let Britain Fly* – which aims to increase air capacity in London and the South East by creating a commitment across the manifestos of all the main political parties at the

2015 General Election to increase capacity, without identifying a specific location at which to do so. The campaign has so far been endorsed by over 70 major businesses covering financial and professional services, property, retail, and construction, as well as higher education institutions.

2. London's leading position as an international finance and business centre is heavily dependent on it being easily accessible not only from across the UK but, crucially, also from all over the world. Maintaining London's connectivity to key business markets is of vital importance to the UK economy.

Recent research by the City Corporation has found that a significant majority of businesses regard air travel as critical or very important for internal company purposes, as well as to facilitate meetings with external clients and/or service providers. The UK has fewer flights to the eight growth economies than its main rivals, which is estimated to result in the annual loss of more than £1bn of trade while also limiting the opportunities to forge links between businesses in the UK and in emerging markets. Meanwhile, major investment in aviation capacity is occurring in Frankfurt and Amsterdam, allowing those economies to expand trade with emerging markets.

3. The Government established the Airports Commission, also known as the Davies Commission, in September 2012 to examine both the short- and the long-term options regarding the UK's status as a global aviation hub. The City Corporation has actively contributed to the Commission's work, not least on connectivity, as well as other inquiries conducted by the House of Commons Transport Select Committee and the London Assembly Transport Committee. This Commission will report its initial findings, specifically its recommendations relating to the short-term policy options available to the Government, by the end of 2013.
4. London First and the City of London Corporation are already conducting a jointly-funded research project which will examine the economic impact of a series of short-term proposals to increase aviation capacity; the findings of this research will be published in a short, technical report by the end of October, 2013.

Proposal

5. London First is funding the campaign's secretariat and providing it with office facilities. However, London First is seeking to raise an additional £250,000 in individual £25,000 increments from interested stakeholders in the private, public and tertiary sectors to better enable the campaign to achieve maximum impact with the relevant stakeholders in the political parties. This additional funding will cover the costs associated with

furnishing the campaign with new research and analysis, as well as promotional activities and other special events.

London First has confirmed that the Canary Wharf Group, Sir Robert McAlpine, the Berkeley Group, John Lewis and Segro have indicated that they will provide co-funding for the campaign; further co-funders will be identified and incorporated into the campaign as it develops.

6. The specific nature of these activities will be based on how the continuing debate about aviation capacity unfolds in the short- to medium-term; it will be largely dependent on a calculated strategy of how increased pressure will make the most impact on the political process. As such, specific items cannot be listed at this juncture but are likely to follow the pattern of similar campaigns. This is likely to include extensive research into the economic and social impact of the various long-term options for increased air capacity; marketing and advertising targeted specifically aimed at influencing the political and policymaking processes in central government and parliament. In short, the total £250,000 campaign fund will enable *Let Britain Fly* to respond expeditiously to events as they unfold.
7. By providing *Let Britain Fly* with £25,000 to support its campaign, the City Corporation would in return be able to nominate a representative to sit on the campaign's operating guidance group; in addition, those organisations contributing to *Let Britain Fly* will also be invited to nominate a representative to participate in a prominent group of senior business people supporting the campaign.
8. This report recommends financial support of £25,000 for the *Let Britain Fly* campaign to be met from your Committee's *Policy Initiatives Fund for 2013/14* categorised under the *Research* section of the Fund and charged to City's Cash.

Financial Implications

9. 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 £25,000 is drawn from your *Policy Initiatives Fund 2013/14*, categorised under the *Research* section of the Fund and charged to City's Cash.
10. The current uncommitted balance available within your Committee's *Policy Initiatives Fund for 2013/14* amounts to some £342,000, prior to any allowance being made for any other proposals on today's agenda.

Conclusion

11. This campaign to secure a commitment in the general election manifestos of the main political parties to increase aviation capacity, without identifying a specific location in which to do so, accords well with the City of London Corporation's role in continuing to promote and contribute to debates on key policy issues affecting the competitiveness of the City of London and its wider communities; supporting the campaign would place the City of London Corporation at the heart of the debate on this increasingly vital issue. As such, this campaign will be synergic with key elements of *The City Together Strategy: The Heart of a World Class City 2008-2014* and the *Communications Strategy 2013-16*.

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