

Committee: Port Health and Environmental Services	Date(s): 12 November 2013
Subject: Port Health and Environmental Services: Public Relations Update	Public
Report of: Director of Public Relations	For Information
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Summary</u></p> <p>This report updates Members on Public Relations activities in support of the services for which the Port Health and Environmental Services Committee is responsible during the period October 2013 to September 2014.</p> <p>Highlights of the support for the services of the Committee include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Media ▪ Polling ▪ Public Affairs ▪ Events ▪ Website ▪ E-communications and social media ▪ Literature and related activities ▪ Member and internal communications ▪ Filming <p>The activities in this report are also in support of the '<i>Communications Strategy 2013- 2016</i>', the three strands of which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ to support and promote "The City" as the world leader in international financial and business services; ▪ to promote the success of the City of London Corporation as the provider of modern, efficient and high quality local and policing services within the Square Mile for workers, residents and visitors; and ▪ to promote the role of the City of London Corporation as a provider of valued services to London and the nation as a whole. <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Recommendation</u></p> <p>The Committee is recommended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Receive this report on Public Relations activities during the period October 2012 to September 2013 in support of the services for which the Committee is responsible. 	

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report highlights the activities of the Public Relations (PR) Office, in the period October 2012 to September 2013, in support of the services for which this Committee is responsible.

1.2 As part of the current communications strategy there are two specific communications priorities at present, in addition to the promotion of financial and business services:

- Supporting London's communities – that is, the work the City Corporation does to support educational and cultural opportunities and economic development, thereby helping to provide jobs and growth and improve the quality of life throughout London.
- Helping to look after London's heritage and green spaces – that is, the work the City Corporation does to look after London and the nation's heritage and to provide green spaces across the capital and beyond.

The PR Office is working with Departments across the organisation to deliver these two priorities across the full range of PR activities.

1.3 In addition to these priorities, the PR Office has over the past 12 months implemented a comprehensive survey of the City Corporation's key audiences. Conducted by the leading international market research agency TNS (part of the WPP Group) between April and June 2013, the polling is used to ascertain attitudes and perceptions amongst a cross-section of the City Corporation's key audiences and stakeholders as identified in the *Communications Strategy*. As in previous surveys, four separate extensive polls were undertaken of senior City executives; City businesses; City workers; and, City residents. The results, once analysed, inform the City Corporation's strategic planning, communications strategy, and service delivery.

2. Media

2.1 Throughout the year, October 2012 - September 2013, the Media Team obtained 63 Port Health and Environmental Services stories in print online, television and radio. According to Durrants (the independent media monitoring agency), the total advertising value of the coverage achieved in print amounted to £108,101.

2.2 Highlights of stories initiated by the Media Team in the Public Relations Office throughout the year, October 2012 – September 2013, include:

- **Snow conditions in the City**

LBC Radio interviewed Director of the Built Environment on how the City Corporation is dealing with the freezing conditions.

- **City employment scams**

BBC Radio 5 Live Investigates ran a story on employment scams in the Square Mile. Port Health & Public Protection Director, Jon Aaverns, was interviewed.

- **Grave re-use scheme**

BBC Radio 4 Today, BBC1 Breakfast, BBC London Radio, BBC London TV News, BBC News Online, Daily Mail, (various, September 2013), *The Spectator* (15 June 2013), Gary Burks was interviewed on the City of London Cemetery & Crematorium's grave re-use scheme in media reports on the UK grave space crisis.

- **Thames Fishery Research Experiment**

The Daily Mail, Evening Standard (29 October), both ran an article on the Thames Fishery Research Experiment, after a competitor landed a 9lb cod.

- **Chapel restoration at the City of London Cemetery**

Newham Recorder and East London Advertiser (June 16) both carried a two-page feature on the chapel restoration, the life of Gary Burks, and the Jack the Ripper victims.

3. Polling

3.1 The PR Office, on behalf of the City of London Corporation, undertakes a triennial survey of its key audiences – City residents, City businesses, City workers, and senior executives. The latest survey series was due to take place in 2012, but it was decided to delay the fieldwork for a year to avoid a clash with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

3.2 This survey includes questions pertaining to the satisfaction with services that are overseen by this Committee. In general, the results are positive; there is net satisfaction for the provision of all such services. Key results include:

- Levels of satisfaction with refuse collection remain very high across all the audiences with net satisfaction figures of 89% for residents, 52% for businesses, 49% for workers and 56% for senior executives, TNS have indicated that the satisfaction levels for this and most other services compare very favourably with other Local Authorities.
- The satisfaction with recycling is also high with net satisfaction figures of 78% for residents and 35% for businesses with a significant increase in the number of businesses satisfied.
- Again Environmental Health shows good satisfaction levels with net satisfaction of 42% for residents, 49% for businesses and 43% for senior executives though there was a fall in the satisfaction level amongst residents.
- The only City of London service to record a negative net satisfaction rating was public conveniences and community toilet scheme (-14% for workers and -12% for businesses however there was net satisfaction of +1% amongst residents). Work is already being carried out to address this which is likely to include further polling to determine the specific reasons for the dissatisfaction which will inform the strategy.

4. Public Affairs

4.1 The Public Relations Office provides Public Affairs advice to Departments across the organisation on specific issues that may affect their work as and when required.

5. Events

5.1 The Public Relations Office provides an event management service for Departments across the organisation. This has included:

- **Clean City Awards**

The annual awards scheme was this year held at Mansion House on 8 February in the presence of the Lord Mayor and Sheriff Jeffrey Evans. The Lord Mayor handed winners awards in the categories of Waste Operative Awards; Special Recognition Award; Street Sweeper of the Year Award.

5.2 In addition, the Team facilitates all staff events which engage with staff from across the organisation, including the Learning and Development Week including the Managers' Forum and Ashridge Lunch, Staff Annual Lunches, and Masterclasses.

6. Website

6.1 The Public Relations Office is responsible for the City of London Corporation's external website. During the past year the majority of this work has been focussed on the quality of its content – across the four main clusters - to make it as easy as possible to find via search engines and for it to be relevant, current and user-friendly. The Office has organised a number of workshops and facilitates regular weekly meetings with content providers across the organisation to share best practice and discuss any issues. It regularly reviews pages relating to Port Health and Environmental Services and alerts editors when content is out of date, needs rewriting for clarity or is missing information. It also hosted a conference in October to thank content providers, share knowledge and discuss how the site might develop in future.

7. E-communications including social media

7.1 The Public Relations Office is responsible for the creation and development of e-communications. It also gives advice to departments on how to communicate across social platforms. The City Corporation now has 22 Facebook pages (including a HARC page) and almost 50 Twitter feeds (including trading standards and safety, health and wellbeing including @Safesquaremile which helps debunk some of the myths that surround this theme), a YouTube channel and Flickr account which cover the wide range of services we provide (full list at www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/social).

7.2 PRO is currently liaising with the Contact Centre and an external supplier on adapting an existing local council app platform for its own local authority services, providing information and encouraging feedback/reporting.

8. Publishing and related activities

8.1 The Public Relations Office is also responsible for the corporate publications strategy and its implementation. In addition, the Public Relations Office is also responsible for the City Corporation's brand identity and assists Departments with branding guidelines.

9. Member and internal communications

9.1 The Public Relations Office, working closely with the Member Services Team, has responsibility for communications with Members. This includes Members' Briefing,

which has been reviewed in recent months. The Public Relations Office also provides updates and Briefings to Members on topical issues.

- 9.2 The Public Relations Office provides internal communications for the City Corporation as a whole and gives support to individual departments as and when required. The staff handling Port Health and Environmental Services matters are regularly supported and assisted in improving communications through a number of channels and in a variety of ways including intranet, bulletins, online polls, copywriting, image manipulation and content publishing.
- 9.3 PRO also produces the e-magazine 'the Leader', which celebrates the successes of staff in the area of Port Health and Environmental Services and showcases the achievements to the rest of the organisation. It also provides regular updates for the intranet home page, helped set up the Town Clerk's blog, and organises visits by the Town Clerk to individual service areas. PRO is currently liaising with the relevant departments over a date in the future for the Town Clerk to visit – likely to be early in 2014.

10 Filming

- 10.1 The Public Relations Office has a dedicated Film Team responsible for liaising with film crews and City Corporation departments to facilitate shoots within the Square Mile and on our property.

Background Papers:

Members will find it useful to refer to the '*Communications Strategy 2013-2016*'

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