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Chief Executive Officer's Report

Board paper title		Paper 26/05/2021 - 2
Chief Executive Officer's Report		
Report by	Wayne Hubbard	
Job Title	Chief Executive Officer	
Date of decision	Board Meeting 26 May 2021	

Summary
This report provides an update on recent activity.

Recommendations
<p>The Board is recommended to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the updates presented; and • Approve the Annual Governance Statement (as part of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return) shown at Appendix 5.

Risk Management	
Risk	Action to mitigate risk
No specific risks are identified in relation to this report.	

Implications
Legal None
Financial None
Equalities None

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Why the paper is being presented

The paper is presented in order to provide an update on activities since the last meeting of the Board.

Report

Top issues

Commercialisation

We are continuing to develop our commercial strategy and approach. Priority is being given to the development of the circular economy directory and associated brokerage and sales assistance products. The circular economy training academy development continues and a pilot executive 'circular economy 101' is being planned for circular economy week.

A series of commercialisation strategy workshops have been arranged with contributions from board members Joe and Chantelle. James Barrett-Miles has been engaged to help review and develop the emerging strategy.

Recovery /Green New Deal

The first tranche of emergency green new deal grants to circular SMEs were distributed on time to 21 circular SMEs with a total value of £200,000, safeguarding 168 jobs (see programme report for further details).

We are exploring partnerships with a small number of boroughs to help them put together bids from the Mayor's Future Neighbourhoods fund. A bid between a borough, local community group and ReLondon has been submitted for National Lottery Funding.

This is a very exciting opportunity to bring together local authorities, business, civil society, and citizens together to develop job, recovery and address inequalities through a circular economy lens.

Office relocation / COVID-19

The break clause in the current lease at 69 Wilson Street has been activated and we are required to be out by 6th September 2021.

A consultant project manager has been engaged to manage whole process of the move, from securing alternative serviced accommodation, agreeing the scope of dilapidations work required and overseeing its execution to setting up the new office space and organising the move itself.

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The scope of dilapidations works required by the landlord has been agreed and they are in line with our expectations with regards to extent and cost.

A number of different serviced offices have been viewed and we are currently agreeing contracts to move to serviced offices (at the White Collar Factory) on Old Street roundabout. Costs for the new office are in line with expectations and budget.

The new office will be able to accommodate 18 desks in normal circumstances. We await updated guidance from government on COVID-19 precautions as these will affect capacity. We are working on updated work procedures as staff will now be expected to spend, on average, around half of their time working at home. The office will become more a place where we meet and collaborate, and the shared spaces around the office are ideal for this purpose.

Finance/Funding

A longer term finance plan is being developed that will look beyond the current business plan period, to enable us to better calibrate our longer term resource allocation and skills needs.

Staffing

Leavers

Anya Trivedi (research intern) and Isabella Kima (Corporate Communications Lead) left in April 2021.

Natalia Agathou, Business Advice Manager in the Business Transformation will be leaving at the end of May 2021.

Starters

Pauline Metivier, Head of business transformation and sector support joined at the end of March. Sarah Malone, Senior Advisor - Circular Economy Analytics and Knowledge joined in April.

Movers

Nicola Bradley (formerly Office and Community Manager) has secured a new position as Business Engagement Lead within the Business Transformation Team.

Recruitment

The following positions are vacant and will be recruited to in the coming weeks.

- Office & Community Manager (Central team). This role will be revised given our move to serviced offices.
- Administration Officer (Central team). This is a new position for 2021/22 which was approved as part of the 2020-25 business plan.

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- Two Grade 5 Project Co-ordinators in the Local Authority Support Team.
- Corporate Communications Lead.
- Business Advisor in the Business Transformation Team.
- Business Advice Manger in the Business Transformation Team

Organisational review

A report is being developed by a consultant and is in the draft stage.

Communications and publicity

The main activity and achievement from the previous quarter was the rebranding of LWARB to ReLondon, which happened on time and on budget on 8th March 2021. The new name and identity have been universally welcomed by stakeholders and have provided the organisation with a refreshed platform from which to communicate its message. A comprehensive communications plan to support the change was delivered through a combination of social media, PR, newsletter-style announcements to our contacts database and a series of face-to-face briefings for priority partners, providing an opportunity to re-engage with stakeholders at a senior level.

Circular Economy Week:

CE Week 2021 will take place from 14-18 June and is the first quarter's priority activity for the communications team. This year's target is for 50+ events to take place during the week, with 38 events confirmed at the time of writing. Anchor events for the week include:

- **Launch event:** Monday 14th June – Circular economy and the climate crisis. Mike Berners-Lee (author and academic) has been confirmed as the keynote speaker, with Jocelyn Bleriot from Ellen MacArthur Foundation and Shirley Rodrigues, Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, confirmed as additional speakers.
- **Business networking:** Wednesday 16th June – the Business Transformation programme is collaborating with Circular Glasgow and potentially also Aberdeen and Edinburgh to host an SME networking event, to share good practice and promote UK-based circular businesses.
- **Local government day:** Thursday 17th June – two events are currently planned. The first is in partnership with London Councils, to showcase the work being led by them and ReLondon on data and analytics – in particular material flow analyses and consumption profiling across London and its boroughs. The second is a showcase event to promote ReLondon's training academy to senior local authority officers.
- **Ellen MacArthur Foundation cities panel:** Thursday 17th June – still to be confirmed, but planned: a pre-recorded panel discussion with London, Sao

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Paulo and New York to discuss the cities' strategic partnership with the EMF, their goals and achievements to date.

In addition to these anchor events:

- ReLondon is running a number of CIRCulT-related events (two in collaboration with C40 Cities) during the week;
- Wayne Hubbard and Ali Moore will host a daily 15-minute 'Circular economy 101' as a Zoom drop-in, in the style of the Circular Economy Playbook podcast;
- Circular Glasgow will host their 'Get inspired' event on circular business on Tuesday 15th; and
- Love Not Landfill will be hosting an online clothes swap with on-line clothes sharing platform Nuw on the evening of Thursday 17th.

The week as a whole is attracting a large number of built environment-themed events from hosts and partners this year, which is in line with the focus on built environment at COP26 – but all types of events are welcome.

Formal partners confirmed for the week so far include the GLA; London & Partners; the Ellen MacArthur Foundation; and LEDNet (who are providing sponsorship funding). Sponsorship discussions are taking place with a further two organisations, meaning that CE Week will be income-generating despite being free to attend and online.

Press releases:

Due to the pre-election period, only two press releases have been issued in the last three months:

- **LWARB renamed as ReLondon** – 8th March 2021 – a news release was distributed to support the rebrand, using survey results on awareness of and progress on circular economy amongst small businesses and councils across the UK. Coverage was primarily in waste industry and environment trade outlets with some achieved in specialist design and marketing publications.
- **Circular Fashion Fast Forward** – 15th March 2021 – a news release accompanied the final report and case studies produced for this project, funded by the Laudes Foundation and co-delivered with QSA Partners. Coverage included Edie; London News Today; Fashion Network; and Eco-Textile News.

Events:

Fewer events than previous quarters have taken place since the last Board meeting, primarily due to the pre-election period. Highlights include:

- **Environmental Audit Committee** hearing – ReLondon were called to submit evidence to the hearing on textiles recycling and circular economy business

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models. Wayne Hubbard attended the hearing, which was broadcast on Parliament Live TV.

- **Circular Economy Inspirations** – panel discussion run by Edie, featuring Wayne Hubbard, on the challenges and opportunities for circular economy in driving a green recovery.
- **The Re-use Conference** – presentation at this Let's Recycle conference on London Repair Week by Violetta Lynch.
- **Whitehall & Industry Group** – the role of academia in COP26. Pauline Metivier presented on ReLondon and our collaborations with London's HE sector to deliver impact.

Full detail is given in Appendix 2.

Podcast:

Three podcast interviews have been recorded since the last Board meeting, but due to resourcing and technical issues have not yet been edited together into an in-depth episode on consumption-based emissions, cities and the circular economy. These interviews are with Mark Watts (C40 Cities); Jocelyn Bleriot (Ellen MacArthur Foundation); and Kate Raworth (author and economist). Once a new corporate communications lead has been appointed, podcast planning and production will begin again in earnest.

Dashboard Project Commentary

Detailed updates on programmes are included in paper 4. The dashboard is attached at Appendix 1.

Waste Composition Analysis

ReLondon (in consultation with the waste analysis service providers) has developed a draft protocol for local authorities to standardise how waste composition analyses are conducted. Once data is standardised it will be easier to establish a London waste composition analysis. This project has been listed as amber due to slippage in the delivery timetable. Because of COVID restrictions, pressure on local services and changes to working practices it has not been possible to progress to the next project phase; testing the protocol. The team is in discussions with a number of waste authorities keen to conduct waste composition analyses this year which would get the project back on timetable. Delivery, and the route to green, is however dependant on their willingness to proceed.

Circular Economy Training Academy

This project has been paused between February and April to allow the project manager to work on the Ultra Low Waste Neighbourhood project and apply for the Climate Action Fund. It has started again in early May as we are transitioning to a

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new project manager internally who will have the capacity to run it going forward, and this should then turn to green.

London-wide campaign

The new London Recycles London-wide campaign was delayed from last year as a result of the pandemic and the pivoting of resources to create and deliver communications to support boroughs and waste authorities. The team is now working hard to get the campaign procured but resources are stretched as the Food Wave project is currently under-resourced, and Violetta Lynch (our London Recycles campaign lead) is covering both. Time will be recovered where possible through shortened procurement and planning deadlines; and new posts within the Local Authority Support team will provide support to the behaviour change team once recruited. This project should then turn to green.

Podcast

The diversion of corporate communications resources to an intensive three months of delivery between December and March for the ReLondon rebrand put the podcast on temporary pause; and our corporate communications lead (Isabella Kima) left ReLondon in early April, and this is the reason for highlighting this as amber. We are currently advertising for a replacement who will be tasked with building up podcast episode frequency again, and return this project to green.

Material flow analysis

The material flow analysis for food at London level is currently being delivered and we have enough funding in the budget to perform another material flow analysis on another focus area. However, the current budget does not allow for all five-materials flow analysis across our five focus areas (food, plastics, textiles, built environment, electricals) to be performed. This was always a known restriction and the service provider (Circle Economy) was asked to help seek external funding to support this valuable work. We are currently looking for external partners (public funding bodies or foundations) to help fund the gap, and the success of this is the route to green for this project.

Food Wave

The same issue affects Food Wave as affects the London-wide campaign (above): namely resourcing. Until a longer term (but temporary) project resource is recruited for Food Wave, we will be stretched to deliver both to demanding deadlines. A short-term solution has been agreed until end July, but a campaign lead will need to be in place by early August to deliver this EU-funded project securely within the timeline. A business case for recruitment is being prepared currently, and a successful recruitment will be the project's route to green.

Love Not Landfill Partnerships

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Partnerships are being sought to scale up campaign activity for Love Not Landfill, which otherwise operates on a small maintenance budget. Several positive conversations have taken place recently with brands and retailers about collaborating on (and funding) a pop-up second-hand shop in November, but seeking sponsorship or partnership funding remains challenging.

Culture, Knowledge and Skills

A knowledge project is up and running, but a wider skills review will take place alongside work on adopting a more commercial mindset. This work is dependent upon the organisational review that is currently in draft and the future funding work. This will then enable a better understanding of what actions are needed and enable this project to become green.

Audit Committee Activity

The Committee, Chaired by Cllr Guy Senior, met once on 12 May 2021 since the last meeting of the Board. The following items were discussed:

Finance Report

The Q4 finance report was agreed by the Committee. This includes expanded sections on the Board's sources of income and a summary of investment performance. The finance report is attached at Appendix 3. Note that the figures shown provisional pending final investment reports and year-end adjustments. Appendix 3a shows the Q4 report the revised format that will be used from 2021/22 onwards.

Internal Audit Assurance Review and Internal Audit Report

The Committee noted ReLondon's internal auditor, Ankura/TIAA Ltd's, assurance review to satisfy the internal audit requirements for the Annual Governance and Assurance Return. The audit report is attached at Appendix 4. The review gave an overall assessment of substantial assurance, and noted that "ReLondon is a 'well-run organisation with good accounting practices' and that "Good corporate governance is practiced by the Board with appropriate Member involvement".

Annual Governance and Accountability Return Governance Statements

The Committee reviewed and agreed the AGAR Governance Statements for the year ending 2020/21 (Appendix 5) and recommended these be approved by the Board.

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The Board is therefore requested to review each of the statements (1 to 9) in the Annual Governance Statement and is recommended to approve them.

The Financial Statements section of the AGAR will be ready for approval by the Board by mid-June. An additional board meeting has been called on 17th June to approve these. At the time of writing it is not clear whether an 'in person' meeting will be required for this, but it is hoped that this can be done remotely.

HR Update

The Committee noted the staff turnover since the previous meeting (as reported above) and approved the deletion of one Advisor role in the Local Authority Support team and the establishment of two Local Authority Support Co-ordinators.

Risk Register

The Risk Register was reviewed. No new high level risks were recorded.

Supporting papers/appendices

- Appendix 1 Project Dashboard
- Appendix 2 Events List
- Appendix 3 Finance Report
- Appendix 3a Finance Report (revised format)
- Appendix 4 Assurance Review & Internal Audit Report
- Appendix 5 Annual Governance Statement