

International Standards Conference

SMT Lead: Steve Barrow,
Director of Standards Paper reference: 10/37

Board meeting date: 23/03/2010 Confidentiality: **Open**

1. Issue

- 1.1.1 To seek the Board's approval to Standards for England supporting the second international World Cities Conference on Fighting Corruption and Safeguarding Integrity.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1.1 The Board is asked to note progress on the development of the 2011 international conference.
- 2.1.2 The Board is asked to approve Standards for England's support of this event, in the form of:
- Underwriting the event to a maximum of £35k; and
 - Providing in-house administrative resources to help organise and run the event.

3. Consideration

3.1 Background

- 3.1.1 In February 2007 the Amsterdam Integrity Bureau celebrated its 5th anniversary by holding the World Cities Conference on Fighting Corruption and Safeguarding Integrity. For the first time the leaders of the core standards agencies of seven world cities (Amsterdam, Antwerp, Hamburg, Hong Kong, London, New York and Sydney) gathered to exchange experience of their efforts to fight corruption and safeguard ethical standards at the local level.

- 3.1.2 A second such conference is now being planned and the intention is to host it in one of the cities involved in the first conference. Standards for England has been approached and offered the opportunity of organising and sponsoring the second such conference in London in 2011.
- 3.1.3 The plan is to hold a two day event involving the same seven cities as at the first conference ('advanced' cities), along with seven 'follower' cities, which are starting to develop their systems for fighting corruption and ensuring high standards. This latter group of cities may include Johannesburg, Prague, Sofia, Vilnius, Mexico City and Ankara.
- 3.1.4 In total, the number of delegates is likely to be between 35 - 40 once we have included invited representatives from other organisations; for example: United Nations; European Union.
- 3.1.5 At the meeting in November 2009, the Board agreed, in principle, to organise and sponsor (in part) the event, subject to more detailed costings being provided. A corresponding progress report was presented to and noted by the Board at the meeting in January 2010.

3.2 Developments to date

- 3.2.1 The Greater London Authority (GLA) is supportive of our plans for the international ethics conference. They have agreed to provide the GLA building as a venue for the conference and 14 and 15 April 2011 have been booked as provisional dates.
- 3.2.2 The possibility of the GLA organising a short London tour for delegates, which may include visits to Westminster and / or the Olympic Village, is also being discussed.
- 3.2.3 Professor Alan Lawton from Hull University (who is well known to Standards for England and was involved in the 2007 Amsterdam Conference) has been in touch with a number of academics from the previous conference and has found that they are all very keen to be involved again. He has also made contact with academics in Mexico, Columbia and Hong Kong and asked them to approach their respective agencies, informally at this stage, prior to the Standards for England giving full commitment to the conference.
- 3.2.4 It is intended that a book, based on the content of the conference, be produced. We have been assured that the publisher will cover the cost of this. Failing that, the GLA have offered to produce and fund an electronic version.
- 3.2.5 Below is a broad outline of costs for hosting the conference.

3.3 Cost estimate

Catering

Estimate based on all meals (including dinner) and coffee breaks.

10k

Materials

All conference materials, handouts etc (which can be designed in-house)

10-15k

Delegate and conference management

Managing delegate bookings as well registration on the day etc

10k

ESTIMATED TOTAL

30-35k

3.4 Cost assumptions

- 3.4.1 The costs above are based on the GLA providing the venue, which they have committed to doing.
- 3.4.2 In terms of our own resources, it has been estimated that we will need to commission someone to provide event management services on the day (included in the above estimate).
- 3.4.3 We expect the representatives from the advanced cities to pay for their own flights and accommodation. Some provision may also need to be put aside to contribute to the expenses of those representatives from less affluent cities; it has been suggested, but not agreed at this stage, that the advanced cities contribute to cover this.
- 3.4.4 The costs provided for materials are based on the assumption that we design handouts, flyers and conference packs in-house. These are important if we are to secure sponsorship for the event. We will also need to design sponsor packages.
- 3.4.5 The level of interest expressed already in the event suggests that the possibility of securing some sponsorship for the event is likely. It has been calculated that the maximum contribution Standards for England will need to make will be £30 – 35k, which would guarantee that the event would go ahead. However, any sponsorship we do secure will reduce this.
- 3.4.6 It will be difficult, however, to gain any definite commitment from sponsors without having fully committed to the event ourselves.

3.4.7 We would, of course, vet any potential sponsors to ensure that they are appropriate to be associated with this type of event.

3.5 Benefits for Standards for England

3.5.1 Having a significant involvement in a successful event of this nature would help to enhance our international profile and reputation, as well as that of our framework and standards in public life.

3.5.2 Participation in the conference would provide us with an opportunity to share relevant knowledge / experience and benchmark ourselves against comparable organisations from other parts of the world, as well as helping developing organisations.

4. Risk and financial considerations

4.1.1 We have made provision for the £35k figure in our budget, but in these straitened economic times such an international event may not be perceived as a good use of public money. However, with contributions from other bodies the actual cost to Standards for England may be relatively small. And any cost must be balanced against the benefits that may result (see 3.5).

4.1.2 We believe the administrative costs of organising the event could be absorbed within the organisation without detriment but this issue should become clearer once we have approached potential sponsors.

4.1.3 Whilst we deliver a broad programme of events for the regulated and standards communities within our jurisdiction, we would need to be mindful of how we communicate that we are staging an international conference.

4.1.4 There is an environmental impact to hosting an international conference. One way to mitigate this is to calculate the carbon footprint of our event and then look for ways to offset that impact.

5. Appendices and attachments

5.1.1 None.