

## **London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham**

**Report to: THE ECONOMY, HOUSING AND THE ARTS POLICY AND  
ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE**

**Date: 09/09/2020**

**Subject: PROGRESS REPORT ON UPSTREAM**

**Report of: Karen Galey (AD, Economy); Prema Gurunathan (MD, Upstream)**

**Responsible Director: Tony Clements**

### **Summary**

This is a progress report on Upstream's work since it last reported to the PAC in September 2018.

Upstream is a partnership between LBHF and Imperial College London. The setting up of Upstream was a recommendation of the Industrial Strategy 'Economic Growth for All' published in July 2017. Within the Industrial Strategy, its remit encompasses some of the 'West Tech' theme but also supports work across all the other three themes (see Appendix 1).

Upstream was launched in January 2018 with a mission to help turn the borough into a leading destination for the science, tech and creative industries and to help transform White City into an innovation district.

Over time, it has become clearer how Upstream's new approach and activities are helping to deliver the Industrial Strategy.

Firstly, Upstream supports the arrival of key anchor companies and helps galvanise and build relationships with the science, tech and creative businesses whose engagement is critical to the delivery of the Industrial Strategy. Upstream has engaged business in the Borough in a way not done before. Secondly, Upstream supports science, tech and creative businesses through initiatives and events, as set out below from 1.12-1.15. Thirdly, through its convening and connecting, Upstream has helped stimulate the ecosystem in H&F.

### **Recommendations**

1. For the Committee to note and comment on the report.

**Wards Affected: All**

### **H&F Priorities**

Please state how the subject of the report relates to our priorities – delete those priorities which are not appropriate

Our Priorities	Summary of how this report aligns to the H&F Priorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building shared prosperity</li> </ul>	<p>Supporting the arrival of anchor companies in the Borough; engaging them in a way not previously done. Engaging and supporting science, tech and creative industries in H&amp;F through initiatives and events that support business growth. Supporting the Industrial Strategy Board and its working groups. Ensuring that businesses are aware of initiatives offered by LBHF, charities and Imperial that help share prosperity in the Borough. During COVID-19, supporting H&amp;F's work around an economic response/recovery, in particular discretionary grants.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being ruthlessly financially efficient</li> </ul>	<p>Working on lean resource, building relationships that allow business-support events and initiatives to be held at no cost at various venues; leveraging relationships to provide experts and high-profile speakers to the business community. Now beginning to look to diversifying Upstream's funding for longer-term organisational sustainability.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Taking pride in H&amp;F</li> </ul>	<p>Promoting H&amp;F as a great place for the science, tech and creative industries. Taking steps to help transform White City into an innovation district.</p>

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**Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report**

None.

1.1 Upstream is a partnership between LBHF and Imperial College London. It was established in January 2018 with a mission to help turn the Borough into a leading destination for the science, tech and creative industries and to help transform White City into an innovation district.

**Structure and resource**

1.2 Upstream started with a Managing Director (job-share between Prema Gurunathan and Jenni Young). Jenni Young left in February 2019 and till

January 2020, this role was covered on a three-day a week basis by Prema Gurunathan, with an events temp on a similar arrangement. The Upstream team now includes Ms. Gurunathan on four days a week, alongside a full-time Stakeholder Engagement Manager who was joined by an Events and Marketing in April during lockdown. A small operational budget comes from Imperial College London whilst the cost of staffing is split between LBHF and Imperial College.

1.3 Upstream's MD reports to Karen Galey (AD, Economy) and John Anderson (Director of Financial Strategy, Imperial College). The Enterprise Advisory Group which helped steer and advise the partnership was dissolved and it is expected that Upstream will receive such functions from one of the Industrial Strategy's working groups.

## **Objectives**

1.4 In 2019, Upstream's main focus was on events as these were high visibility and helped create groundswell at 'grassroots' level in the business community. Behind the scenes, it continued to engage and work with key stakeholders, laying the groundwork for the formation of the Industrial Strategy Board in early 2020.

1.5 From now till the end of 2021 (when funding has been agreed to between LBHF and Imperial College), its priorities are: a) To have galvanised support for the industrial strategy and recovery plan amongst anchor businesses and key organisations in the Borough b) To have created a recognisable community of science, tech and creative businesses and entrepreneurs who are engaged with Upstream and the wider industrial strategy c) To have created and organically grown the brand of the White City Innovation District such that it is used by businesses in the area and recognised by a wider target audience. The above objectives contribute directly to the four pillars set out in the Industrial Strategy (see Appendix 1).

1.6 Two more parochial objectives are to d) Lay the groundwork for diversification of Upstream's funding, with other players, in addition to H&F and Imperial College London supporting the organisation financially e) Improve governance, accountability and access to expert advice

1.7 The approach Upstream adopts is to work (more) effectively in partnership with the likes of H&F's wider economic development team, Imperial's White City Incubator, ScaleSpace, Imperial College's Business School as well as the likes of Blenheim Chalcot, anchor businesses and arts organisations in the Borough.

1.8 Upstream last updated the EHA PAC in September 2018. It is pleased to do so again and sets out below the partnership's progress..

## **Contribution and progress**

1.9 Since Upstream last updated the EHA PAC, it has become clearer how Upstream's work helps deliver the Industrial Strategy. Firstly, Upstream

supports the arrival of key anchor companies and helps galvanise and build relationships with the science, tech and creative businesses whose engagement is critical to the delivery of the Industrial Strategy. Upstream has engaged business in the Borough in a way not done before. Secondly, Upstream supports science, tech and creative businesses through initiatives and events, as set out below from 1.14-1.17. Thirdly, through its convening and connecting capabilities, Upstream has helped stimulate the ecosystem in H&F.

- 1.10 Upstream has a digital community of just over 2,800 members (including newsletter and social media). This represented a growth of 66% from Dec. 2018 to Dec. 2019. In autumn 2019, Upstream launched a [podcast](#) where it highlights the innovative businesses in H&F.

### **Industrial Strategy Board**

- 1.11 Upstream's 2019 innovation breakfast at White City House provided the template for H&F's leadership to engage with target businesses at C-suite level. The strong external attendance at the breakfast was repeated later in the year, reflecting the interest by businesses in the Industrial Strategy as well as Upstream's ability to engage and convene.
- 1.12 Upstream worked closely with AD Economy to set up the Industrial Strategy Board (which met for the first time on 27 February 2020) and assisted with the setting up of the Board's three working groups (Enterprise, Place-making and Education/Skills). Again, this will be a step-change in the way and breadth of the Borough's engagement with businesses.
- 1.13 Through Upstream's stakeholder engagement work, LBHF has met with the likes of the CEO of dunnhumby and UKTV, the global sustainability director of YOOX-NET-A-PORTER and the CEO of Founders4Schools (an ed-tech company) that is now working with LBHF's Education department to improve careers advice and work experience opportunities in H&F schools. All these companies will be involved in the Industrial Strategy Board or its working groups.

### **Supporting science, tech and creative businesses**

- 1.14 A regular programme of events and business support initiatives covering the pain points of businesses including marketing, sales, pitching (to investors), fundraising (from venture capital and angels), recruiting tech talent and leadership. In 2019, a women entrepreneurs' workshop organised with the White City Incubator, offering a free creche and attracted 35 attendees. Five pro-bono experts/speakers delivered the material for the workshop, four of these experts were local residents/businesses.

New programmes launched include the Deep Tech Network. Started in May 2018, with Upstream working in conjunction with Imperial's Chemistry Department, Enterprise team and White City Incubator, the Deep Tech Network draws together the varied disciplines (e.g. life sciences, health and med tech, security, clean-tech) which want to make fundamental improvements to the grand challenges in society. The network has proved itself to be a vibrant and welcomed initiative, drawing attendees from across the UK and is scheduled to take place three times a year.

1.15 London Tech Week (LTW) remains an important point for Upstream. In 2019, Upstream partnered with Blenheim Chalcot, Huckletree West and White City Place in delivering a policy breakfast and an extremely well-attended evening talk/social. The latter attracted over 120 attendees and featured the COO of BBC Design and Engineering, OpenCell, STEM charity Generating Genius and a partner from Blenheim Chalcot as speakers. This eclectic line-up showed the range of what is deemed to be relevant in 'tech' within H&F. In addition, the introduction of 'social partners' meant tech businesses in the Borough had ownership of the evening and that LTW had a west London home too. See Upstream's LTW video [here](#). This year, Upstream's programme on behalf of LBHF saw the borough selected as one of seven to be part of LTW's inaugural 'Borough Day'. Upstream's 'Tech for Impact' and evening social should as a result of this support, have a higher profile.

1.16 On the creative front, Upstream ran a creative meetup with the Royal College of Art (RCA) where speakers included the BBC and Soho House in 2018. In 2019, Upstream partnered with the Lyric Hammersmith to host an evening to raise the profile of their CSR programmes amongst potential corporate and other local supporters.

### **Convening, coordinating and connecting.**

1.17 In 2019, Upstream began to convene the White City Employee Value Proposition (EVP) group of organisations whose members include Novartis, the BBC, YOOX-NET-A-PORTER, Imperial College, and The White Company. The group looks at how it can collectively improve employee attraction and retention in White City. Early wins include sharing of good HR practise when moving into White City and a shared staff retail discount scheme..

1.18 Upstream offers 1-2-1 assistance to businesses and over the last two years , successes included connecting two local female-led businesses, with the result of the more successful business leader joining the other's business as an NED; introducing a tech startup to a relevant professor/researcher at Imperial College and a senior director at an FMCG conglomerate; helping one of Imperial's department with student-work placements and regularly sharing CSR and other LBHF charitable initiatives with the business community. Upstream also continues to coordinate any applications that Imperial College London puts into UKRI which require LBHF support.

## Impact of COVID-19

- 1.19 With the outbreak of COVID-19, Upstream moved its events and assistance online. We instituted e-coffees for businesses to sign up to and also actively reached out to businesses. This resulted in a good understanding of the problems different businesses were facing and where possible, we signposted and connected them to help available.
- 1.20 In addition to highlighting the offers (space, products, events) from local businesses through our communication channels, here are some other ways Upstream has made a difference during COVID-19: a) Connecting an Imperial AI startup to LBHF, who assisted with identifying vulnerable local residents who then received a range of support including food parcels b) Connecting YOOX-NET-A-PORTER to LBHF who in turn drew upon the digital expertise of the company's staff to create a website (H&F Circles) for a community group c) Pivoting our events programme to suit the needs of businesses. The 'Recalibrate' series featured experts who advised our audience how to build relationships online in order to achieve sales; to present and pitch virtually; to improve their PR presence and a coaching session on finding purpose. d) convening the White City EVP group to discuss return to work and good practices around the challenge.
- 1.21 Within the Upstream team, Stephanie Powell helped design the process for the dispensation discretionary grants and worked as an assessor alongside LBHF colleagues. Prema Gurunathan set up and runs Patch, a volunteer mentor matching service that operates under LBHF's auspices.

### List of Appendices:

**All exempt information must be placed in an exempt appendix. As much information as possible must be in the open report, exempt appendices should therefore contain as little information as possible.**

*Appendix 1*

### **Industrial Strategy – background (four themes)**

The Council's Industrial Strategy was launched in July 2017 with the aim of making the Borough "the best place in Europe to do business" and ensuring that all residents and businesses benefit from economic growth within the Borough.

The Industrial Strategy is underpinned by four key themes:

- West Tech, which aims to establish an innovation district around White City, focusing on an Innovation and Growth Partnership between the Council and Imperial College
- Encouraging Enterprise, which aims to deliver more affordable workspace, drive superfast broadband and take an 'economic and social value' approach

to procurement to create new opportunities for local firms and jobs and training for residents

- A Great Place in London, which is aimed at improving town centres, promoting and developing the Borough's Arts, Culture and Leisure scene; taking steps to improve the reputation of Hammersmith & Fulham internationally; and building 10,000 new homes
- People – Economic Growth for All, which aims to ensure that all residents share in the Borough's economic prosperity by leveraging relationships with anchor institutions, improving local supply chains and developing tailored apprenticeship and employment and training and business start-up support packages.