

Next Horizon Strategy to 2024





Our mission is to **make London the best city in the world in which to do business**. We believe that to achieve this London also needs to be a great place to live, work, visit and invest. **London is the UK's capital and a global player**, it has risen to the top of all the main international rankings - but it wasn't always that way and we cannot afford to be complacent.

London First was set up by business leaders with the belief that by harnessing business assets (such as research, insights, connections, know-how, employee base, advocacy, marketing power and leadership) we can drive positive change. We operate as a business campaigning force, with over 200 members, and are uniquely placed to champion the city:

We've done it before: back in the 1990s, London's prospects looked bleak. Business leaders came together to lead when others wouldn't;

We've achieved a lot: over the past three decades, we've campaigned for the creation of the office of London Mayor and Transport for London, for Crossrail, for congestion charging and for expansion at Heathrow; we incubated Teach First and created the UK's largest annual jobs and careers fair for school leavers, Skills London;

We know how to influence and drive change: giving London's employers a powerful voice, prioritising the critical interventions needed to keep our capital competitive and connecting with allies to create solutions that help our country succeed as one.

Now, we're stepping up once again. With our members – and the millions of people they employ in the UK – we are pursuing an agenda that will keep London at the forefront of global business, working with and for the whole UK.

Jasmine Whitbread, London First CEO



London is a vibrant, exciting place to live and work, but we need to get ahead of the issues that will shape its future – the environment, sustainability and diversity – to maintain its connectivity, liveability and appeal.

As we work to do that, we must embrace technology, data and innovation to keep the city globally competitive. We want London to be a capital city the country feels both connected to and proud of – one which works for all its residents, commuters, and those who visit it for work, study or play.

In this next chapter London First can have the most impact by focusing on:



We will respond to ongoing technological and societal change. Innovation and data, the environment and sustainability, and diversity and inclusion will be embedded in what we do and in our organisation itself.

We aim to be the go-to business organisation for London, shaping the city's agenda. Working with our members, our stakeholders, policy makers and our allies we will multiply our impact; together we will drive change.

Our strategy process

We kicked off the nine-month Next Horizon process in January 2019. We started by considering a broad range of themes before running these ideas through three lenses to consider what our members want, what our stakeholders and allies are doing, and London's long-term sustainability as a place to do business. Through ongoing iteration and development of ideas we identified our four priorities and three cross-cutting themes.

Our balanced scorecard sets out our ambitions for the next five years with regards to the impact we deliver, who we work with and for, how we drive member value and being a high performing organisation. It sets out our long-term ambition with annual goals and measures to drive progress and support delivery in year.

Over 60% of members were involved through dedicated events, meetings and surveys, and many more through more informal channels. We spoke to stakeholders, allies and wider business community. Highlights included Chair's breakfasts, a Lords dinner involving partners and peers, and next generation forums.

London First Board and staff also played a critical part, developing ideas and challenging the emerging areas of focus to improve and sharpen them. We are confident that this collaborative and robust approach has delivered a strategy and plan that sets us up for success.

Structure of our balanced scorecard



How we will deliver

Our programme of policy work and corporate affairs activity will influence public policy, drive change, raise awareness, serve members, and celebrate London. This programme combines short-term, quick wins with longer term, large scale activity to provide a balanced portfolio of activity and deliver for our members, stakeholders and London.

We recognise that the rest of the UK needs to feel more vested in its capital, but we also know London needs to work harder to stay globally competitive. These two imperatives are linked: if the rest of the UK does not see the benefits that London brings then London will not receive the investment and support it needs. As such, we will continue to evolve our Growing Together narrative and work to position London as our capital, working for the whole of the UK; more detail on this is provided below.

We continue to identify practical business-led solutions, advocate for these changes and push to see them implemented, and increasingly we actively celebrate those successes to champion the positive role of London First and wider business in effecting

change. We learn from previous experiences and continually evolve and adjust our programme of work to respond.

We have developed and continually strengthened an extensive network of the right people needed to achieve this change - from business leaders and experts to journalists and politicians/policymakers at all levels. We convene the right groups informally and at c.120 different events each year. We develop, publish and disseminate original intellectual property. We conduct both private advocacy and public campaigns, often in partnership with others. Each year we plan our resources to make best use but monitor on an ongoing basis to respond to live opportunities.

We believe we can have the most impact by focussing on four priority areas of people, place, connectivity and competitiveness. We think that this broader focus - covering but going beyond London First's three priorities over the past two years - is right for post-Brexit London. But we recognise we must also be agile, scanning the horizon to identify and predict change, and responding as required to deliver our mission.

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PEOPLE

London must invest in creating the workforce of the future, driving a reskilling and upskilling revolution, leveraging our world-leading universities and education system, and continue to attract the talent it needs from overseas. Celebrating diversity and supporting the next generation of leaders are critical to success.



PLACE

The planning framework must support and encourage high-quality new development of all kinds and across the city as a whole; public policy must change rapidly to support the building of new homes on the scale and at the pace the growing city needs.



CONNECTIVITY

London must extend its role as a connector – physically and digitally connecting people – within the city, as a gateway to the world and connected to the whole of the UK. From supporting sustainable expansion of London’s airports to campaigning for the digital infrastructure and investment in rail that is so badly needed to help our country succeed, we will continue to identify the needs of the future and make the case for immediate action.



COMPETITIVENESS

We will work to keep London’s regulatory and tax regime internationally competitive, support innovation to drive future growth (for example through initiatives to improve data-driven policy making), and celebrate the role that business plays in improving the overall wellbeing of society.



Innovation and data, the environment and sustainability, and diversity and inclusion will be embedded in what we do and in our organisation itself.



London attracts and retains a diverse workforce with the skills required to drive economic growth

We will deliver this by focusing on:

A global workforce for global Britain: we will continue to campaign, both unilaterally and through our #FullStrength coalition, for a fit-for-purpose immigration regime that allows business to recruit the diverse people needed - monitoring implementation, and responding accordingly;

Skilling London: we will build on our successful programme on skills and apprenticeships to achieve policy change and practical interventions around access and opportunity, the impact of automation, and productivity;

Driving diversity and inclusion: a new area of coordinated activity, where we will establish a next generation network, to increase diversity of member engagement; and

London Liveability: we will develop a new index to measure and track cross-cutting indicators that give a snapshot of London's liveability and how it changes over time. This will allow us to engage with members' employees, track progress, tell stories and campaign for improvement.

To increase impact, we will seek to develop and evolve two of our existing programmes, **the Leadership Exchange and Skills London.** We will look for opportunities to support initiatives that connect our corporate members to the education system, and in turn connect our university and further education provider members to business and London Government, recognising the high value of such collaboration.



London's well-planned growth creates high-quality places to live, work and do business

We will deliver this by focusing on:

Setting the agenda on housing: London faces a growing housing shortage that has huge implications for both the quality of life of Londoners and the city's competitiveness. We work with our members to set out clear, evidence-based options to tackle the crisis and work to hold policy makers to account for their policy decisions and delivery. Our principal themes will continue to be: more money (including campaigns to influence the comprehensive spending review); more land (including getting surplus public land developed and reviewing London's Green Belt); and better ways of delivering (including new approaches to how densely homes are built, a move towards modern methods of construction and new tenures, such as build to rent), while recognising the long-term structural nature of London's housing challenge for which there is no simple solution

Land use planning in London: we will continue to work to influence London's planning system - shaping GLA, national and (where strategic in nature) borough policy to create a transparent, predictable system that is properly resourced and facilitates London's growth. This work is critically important - both to meet our members' needs and deliver good development for London. The task is ongoing; we will work to respond to change as well as improving the existing system; and

Commercial property development as a driver of growth: we will dial up our activity, overcoming policy barriers (primarily through our work on planning) and showcasing best practice/future trends.

We will also run projects on **reimagining London's high streets** and **opportunities for innovative models of public/private housing delivery.**



London is physically and digitally well-connected; globally, nationally and locally

We will deliver this by focusing on:

World-class infrastructure: we will act as a catalyst for securing the infrastructure the city needs to thrive. Areas of focus will include digital connectivity (particularly ease and availability of full-fibre broadband and 5G – positioning London at the forefront of 5G rollout and ensuring full-fibre subsidies apply to the capital); regulation which supports the deployment of smart cities technology; and energy and water (particularly ease of connecting new development to the grid and a regulatory and policy environment that supports continued private investment);

A globally connected London: we have a strong track record in supporting airport expansion and will continue to make the case for market-led capacity expansion, across the London airport system, that supports aviation growth in a way that is sustainable and consistent with environmental ambitions;

Intercity connections: our Growing Together business campaign for long-term investment across the UK will expand. We will campaign to convey that connected, integrated metro-regions are drivers of UK growth; and

Keeping London moving: we will continue to make the case for public investment in vital transport upgrades, such as the Bakerloo line extension, as well as new schemes to meet demand (notably Crossrail 2). We will promote the role of private investment (e.g. Heathrow Southern Rail), but also potentially as a substitute/complement for public investment; and develop new funding mechanisms (such as land value capture). We will celebrate the opening of Crossrail and continue to campaign for fiscal devolution to enable the city to meet London's transport needs. We will dial up activity to ensure innovation in future mobility, particularly on road congestion and improving air quality.

This work builds on a long history of transport and infrastructure activity and expands it to respond to London's future needs to improve sustainability and support growth. It recognises shifts in the transport and infrastructure requirements needed to make best use of innovation and technology and to respond to environmental sustainability and societal change.



London business must support and maintain London's competitive edge

We will deliver this by focusing on:

Tax and regulation: we will keep a watching brief on tax and regulation, ready to respond to any development that could damage or enhance London's competitiveness. In particular, we will continue to make the case for further fiscal devolution to London and other city-regions; work with our members to set out how, as a city, we can best meet the carbon targets set by London and the UK government; and advocate to secure business rate reform that works for the whole of London. We will also keep a watching brief on public spending priorities, from adequate resource to maintain the road network, through to funding for London's promotional agency, to keep the capital at the top of its game;

Data-led policy-making: we believe in the power of data and will convene key players to scope, develop a vision, and support development and launch of a refreshed London Data Store, 10 years on from its original inception. We will ensure that it realises its potential to meet the ambition of smarter London government, and is critically a place where private sector data owners deposit and exchange data;

Business as a force for good in London:

business's responsibility to the society in which it operates - beyond creating jobs, paying taxes and driving economic growth - is an area of growing interest to London First members.

Its salience is compounded by cuts to public services; millennial staff who are more purpose driven in their approach to work; and the sense from the most senior business leaders that their experience and expertise can make a positive difference to the city. London First will run an annual campaign, more than likely starting with homelessness, and tell a positive story promoting and highlighting the good business does more generally; and

Net-zero carbon: reduction of carbon emissions is an ever-greater challenge facing business and society. We will work with our members to ensure the individual measures and policies designed to tackle this are effective for business in London and the right choices are made to achieve the desired outcome.

Cross-cutting themes

Through the process we have identified three cross-cutting themes which are embedded in our plans for the first year. Early on in the plan period we will develop clear, compelling positions on these and seek to fully embed them in both our work and our organisation as this will be critical to our future relevance:

- Technology, innovation and data
- Environment and sustainability
- Diversity and inclusion

They will evolve overtime and we anticipate this will be an ongoing process as the wider landscape develops.

Developing agile responses to events/ developments that affect London

In addition to the programme across our four priorities, we will continue to horizon scan and respond to change as appropriate. This will involve dialling up existing work or beginning new programmes of activity when required. Resources will be redeployed to reflect challenges to London's competitive positioning, member needs and opportunities that emerge; this will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

Celebration of London and London business

We recognise the need to celebrate London's strengths and the role of business within it, and through our work we will do more to support and promote this. For example:

- tell the story of the positive role business plays in London;
- convene groups who wouldn't normally come together to better celebrate and promote business in the city;
- give a platform to our members to tell a story of how they have had a positive impact; and
- talk about and celebrate our own successes more vocally.

We will work with allies such as London and Partners to amplify and increase impact.

Strategic relationships: Who we work with and for

Our membership is at the heart of everything we do and our focus over this strategy period will be on deepening and strengthening those relationships.

We will engage business leaders in London's challenges and opportunities, using their insights to help shape our thinking and, where appropriate, support delivery. By extending our relationships within each member organisation, we can better represent the range of their interests, so that we improve the quality of engagement, deliver value for our members and increase the diversity of our network.

We will drive diversity in member engagement by initially focussing on better connecting with the women in our membership, including increasing diversity of attendance at events, considering gender diversity in policy work, and the fielding of diverse London First panels. The whole of the organisation will work to systemise this and adjust approaches to ensure diversity is considered and delivered. In year one, we will scope and deliver a stand-alone next generation programme within our member network, which we hope will deliver more diversity in membership interactions.

We will work extensively with stakeholders and allies, building on our successes, to increase political engagement and leverage our impact. We build broad, deep relationships with the right stakeholders at national, local and borough level to support delivery of our work. We work with our allies across the UK, building strategic relationships and making joint interventions to harness the power of a collective voice. International relationships, including with sister organisations in other major cities, ensure we learn, share best practice, increase impact and support our ambition to keep London globally competitive.

How we operate

London First strives to be a high-performing organisation, with an engaged team at all levels, who work effectively together in line with our shared values: Keep Learning, Be Bold, Take Responsibility and Pull Together.

We are committing to embed the principle of diversity and inclusion in everything we do, including our operations. We will realise the benefits of a diverse organisation and membership, acting as drivers and setting the example in the journey, evolving and changing over the next five years according need and our ability to act.

As part of the process adopted to create this strategy, we have reviewed our ability to deliver against the priorities identified. At this stage, we have the right skills and resource in place but as our agenda evolves, we will keep this under review. We will also explore complementary resourcing models which leverage our network to enable us to have greater impact across everything we do including - but not limited to - member secondments, apprenticeships and internships.

All our staff are fully engaged and responsible for playing a key role in delivering our strategy. We invest in training and personal development to support individuals' ambitions and a high-performance culture. We operate as a leading employer and have subscribed to the Mayor's Good Work Standard. We put into practice policies that promote diversity and inclusion in the broadest sense across the organisation and remain committed to the Future of London Diversity Pledge.

Ourt Board is a senior, influential, experienced group of leaders in their respective fields. Their role is to guide and advise the organisation, acting as ambassadors and leveraging their networks and experience to increase our impact.

We are a not for profit membership group, our corporate members and partners pay an annual membership fee which funds our work. Our membership proposition comprises intelligence, thought leadership, networking and events, and profile. We work collaboratively, delivering together to deploy and amplify our member and partner's assets in pursuit of our mission to make London the best place in the world to do business.

Our highly regarded events programme includes a number of flagship summits which bring people together from within and beyond membership and generates additional revenue to further increase our impact. In the Next Horizon, we will look to launch new propositions and products and continually evaluate and evolve our offering in response to changing member needs and the challenges and opportunities London business faces.

Conclusion and next steps

We have set out an exciting Next Horizon for London First. We have learnt from our own experience and consulted widely.

We have aimed to strike the right balance between building on what's working, making changes and starting new initiatives, anticipating what's needed for the future.

In doing this, we have had to make choices to identify the most important issues on which to focus, we were guided by our rigorous process. We believe this is the right path for us to set off down at this point in our, and London's, evolution. But we will need to stay vigilant along the way to adapt to new challenges and opportunities as they arise.

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We operate as a business campaigning force, with over 200 members, and are uniquely placed to champion the city.

Over the past three decades, we've campaigned for the creation of the office of London Mayor and Transport for London, for Crossrail, for congestion charging and for expansion at Heathrow; we incubated Teach First and created the UK's largest annual jobs and careers fair for school leavers, Skills London.

Now, we are pursuing an agenda that will keep London at the forefront of global business, working with and for the whole UK: people, place, competitiveness and connectivity.