

REQUEST FOR MAYORAL DECISION – MD1429

Title: Park and trees programme 2015-16

Executive Summary:

The Mayor's strategies on Air Quality Climate Change Adaptation and Biodiversity, commit to improving London's green spaces. His "All London Green Grid" sets out a vision for a network of green infrastructure that, through appropriate design and management, can provide a range of services and benefits including: flood management; urban cooling; improving physical and mental health; walking and cycling routes; ecological connectivity; and food growing.

Funding of £1,000,000 has been allocated to a parks and trees programme for the period 2015/16 in order to support the delivery of the "All London Green Grid" and as a distinct green strand of the broader London's Great Outdoors programme. The proposed allocation of this funding was considered at the Mayor's Investment and Performance Board (IPB) of 16 October 2014. The IPB endorsed the proposal.

The funding will see support for, and delivery of, up to 5 spatial projects by March 2016, which would result in the enhancement of at least 20 hectares of green infrastructure and an increase in London's tree cover to help meet the Mayor's target on increasing tree cover by 5 per cent by 2025.

Decision:

That the Mayor approves expenditure of the following funding to continue the Mayor's direct investment in 'parks and trees' in the form of Big Green Fund II and a Community Grant Fund for trees:

1. £900,000 to support projects identified in the All London Green Grid Area; and
2. £100,000 to help meet the Mayor's target for increasing tree cover by 5 per cent by 2025.

Mayor of London

I confirm that I do not have any disclosable pecuniary interests in the proposed decision, and take the decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct for elected Members of the Authority.

The above request has my approval.

Signature:

Date:

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE TO THE MAYOR

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 The previous park and trees programme was authorised by MD294 and MD1056 and approved expenditure up to the end on March 2015.
- 1.2 Approval is now sought to commit funds to continue an element of the Big Green Fund and trees programme until the end of March 2016 amounting to £1,000,000.
- 1.3 In the 'Growing London's Economy' chapter of the Mayor's 2012 manifesto, the Mayor made a commitment to invest in parks and trees. This investment in London's green infrastructure was identified as one element in a package of measures to create jobs, investment and security through business, housing and environmental pledges. He reiterated this in his 2020 Vision.
- 1.4 The proposed investment for 2015-16 demonstrates the Mayor's commitment to sustained investment in green infrastructure and, by aligning Mayoral funding with projects that can meet either of two of the key green infrastructure objectives of the All London Green Grid (i.e. flood-risk management; and improving green links to and from places of work, schools or high streets), the project will be clearly linked to 'resilient city' and 'liveable city' outcomes, both of which underpin London's future economic growth.
- 1.5 The proposed annual budget and outputs for each element of the programme are outlined in the table below. NB the annual budget and outputs will be subject to some variation as both budget spend and outputs are dependent in part on the number and scope of applications for grant funding.

	Finance
Proposed GLA funding	£1,000,000 (Capital) Up to £100,000 (Revenue) – efficiency savings from LGO (parks/trees) 2014/15 programme budget
External income received by GLA	n/a
Additional leverage contributed by delivery organisations	A minimum of £1,000,000 There will be the same match-funding requirement as exists with the current "parks and trees" programme i.e. Mayoral funding will provide 50% of total project costs

- 1.6 Further details and arrangements for the delivery of the individual elements of the programme outlined will be provided in future requests for a Director's Decision.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

2.1 ***Objective 1 - Improve London's green infrastructure by support for projects identified in the All London Green Grid Area Frameworks***

Budget allocation = £900,000

Delivery structure:

- The 11 sub-regional partnerships (which were established to help progress implementation of the All London Green Grid) will be invited to select one or two high-quality, shovel-ready projects from their area framework projects list which are suitable for funding from the Mayor. They will generate a

project list of 12- 20 candidate projects). Suitability will be determined by criteria established by GLA officers. These will include:

- ability to deliver by March 2016 (or earlier);
 - match-funding available;
 - projects that contribute to flood-risk management; or improving green links to and from places of work, schools or high streets.
 - maximise opportunities for volunteering aligned with the ambitions of Team London
- Investment will result in up to 5 new spatial projects by March 2016, which would result in the enhancement of at least 20 hectares of green infrastructure.
 - Projects submitted will be screened by GLA officers to determine whether submissions meet the project call criteria. GLA officers plus an expert panel will select a maximum of 10 projects for further consideration. Project selection will be determined by criteria such as: area of green infrastructure enhanced; number of beneficiaries; etc.
 - Selected projects will be subject to a crowd-sourced public opinion poll (via social media) to determine their public appeal.
 - The 5 most popular projects will each be awarded funding of up to £200,000.

2.2 *Objective 2 - Increase London's tree cover to help meet the Mayor's target on increasing tree cover by 5 per cent by 2025*

Budget allocation = £100,000

Delivery structure:

- A continuation of the existing model whereby GLA would enter into a contractual arrangement with an appropriate provider to administer the grant programme. This would require the contractor work with the GLA to:
 - Promote and advertise the grant fund
 - Enter into funding agreements with successful applicants
 - Provide progress reports and a final report to the Greater London Authority
- The contractor would be offered a management fee of 7.5%
- This investment will deliver 20 community based tree-planting projects by March 2016 resulting in the planting of at least 10,000 new trees.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1 Meeting the objectives of this proposal is expected to bring positive contributions to equality arising through working with local communities to improve the quality of the public realm across the city. Public realm improvements are widely regarded as being beneficial with respect to community cohesion. The lead organisations for chosen projects will also undertake an equalities evaluation. No adverse impacts are identified for the proposed programme of works described for 2015/16.
- 3.2 Procurement processes shall be undertaken in accordance with the Authority's Contracts and Funding Code; this process will be managed by TfL Procurement.

4. Other considerations

Key risks and issues

4.1 There is a possibility that:

- An insufficient number of projects are identified to fulfil the measurable outputs. This is considered low risk as the All London Green Grid Area Frameworks have project lists compiled and validated with boroughs and other key stakeholders
- The quality of the projects coming forward would not be of a standard that would merit Mayor of London funding and support. This is considered low risk because GLA officers, in advance of the formal call for projects are will provide a steer as to the types of projects that would attract support, and the programme will be a grant-based intervention allowing GLA officers to impose quality thresholds through conditions and obligations

Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

4.2 In both the Mayor's election manifesto and his 2020 Vision, '*improving our green spaces*' and '*increasing tree cover*' were identified as objectives to help '*make London the best big city to live in*'. These investments link to a number of Mayoral objectives, including:

- Implementing the All London Green Grid and the green infrastructure objectives expressed in the ALGG Supplementary Planning Guidance – as set out in the London Plan;
- the Mayor's Strategies for Climate Change Adaptation and Biodiversity; and
- Encouraging more use of green space encouraging active lifestyles by contributing to initiatives to combat childhood obesity – as identified in the Health Inequalities Strategy.

4.3 The programme will also help to demonstrate how green infrastructure objectives set out in the consultation draft of London Infrastructure Investment Plan can be better realised.

Impact assessments and consultations

4.4 The ALGG Supplementary Planning Guidance was subject to a statutory public consultation process prior to publication in March 2012. The previous round of Big Green Fund was delivered through the ALGG framework and key stakeholders were involved in the identification of suitable projects. The successful outcomes of this previous round have been used to inform the priorities for funding allocation for the projects identified above.

4.5 The objectives and outcomes of the Big Green Fund are derived from Mayoral strategies which themselves have been subject to extensive consultation and impact assessment. Additionally, the lead organisations for projects being supported by the Big Green fund will undertake community engagement and consultation on each project.

5. Financial comments

5.1 Following IPB (October 2014) endorsement of the on-going delivery of the Mayor's commitments to improving London's parks and green spaces, Mayoral approval is sought for the capital and revenue expenditure allocation on Big Green Fund II as referenced in section 2 above.

5.2 The budget profile for London's Great Outdoors (LGO) is set out below;

2014/15 (£)		2015/16 (£)	
Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue
3,699,000	634,000	1,000,000	0

- 5.3 £1,000,000 Capital budget will support the direct delivery costs of projects outlined in Section 2 above in 2015/16.
- 5.4 Up to £50,000 of the £634,000 approved 2014/15 parks and trees (LGO) revenue budget will be required to market the Big Green fund 2015/16 programme, primarily the associated costs with establishing a public opinion poll (via social media) to establish the level of public support for the projects to be funded in 2015/16. There is further commitment of £142,000 against 2014-15 revenue budgets for Street Trees and Pocket Parks initiatives. Any revenue budget underspend in 2014/15 from the current LGO - parks and trees programme is expected to help fund capital spend on the project or carried forward to 2015/16 to fund administration and promotional costs for new 2015/16 programme of work. However any budget carry forward will be subject to year-end carry forward approval.
- 5.5 If part of this project relates to contracts or funding, officers have to ensure that the requirements of the Authority's Contracts & Funding Code are adhered to. Also if any contracts are consultancy based, officers also have to ensure that the requirements relating to consultancy services within the Authority's Financial Regulations and Expenses & Benefits Framework are adhered to.
- 5.6 Any changes to this proposal must be subject to further approval via the Authority's decision-making process.
- 5.7 The Environment Team within the Development, Enterprise & Environment Directorate will be responsible for managing this project.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1 Sections 1 – 4 of this report indicate that the decisions requested of the Mayor in accordance with the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code fall within the GLA's statutory powers to do such things considered to further or which are facilitative of, conducive or incidental to the promotion of economic development and wealth creation, social development or the promotion of the improvement of the environment in Greater London; and in formulating the proposals in respect of which a decision is sought officers have complied with the Authority's related statutory duties to:
- pay due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people;
 - consider how the proposals will promote the improvement of health of persons, health inequalities between persons and to contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom; and
 - consult with appropriate bodies.
- 6.2 The GLA's provision of funding to continue an element of the Big Green Fund and trees programme falls within the principal purposes of the Authority as it promotes the improvement of the environment and health of Londoners, as well as promoting economic development and social development.

- 6.3 The report indicates that the distribution of £1million amounts to the provision of grant funding and not payment for services. Officers must ensure that the funding is distributed fairly, transparently, in accordance with the GLA's equalities and in manner which affords value for money in accordance with the Contracts and Funding Code.
- 6.4 The mayor may, under section 38 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999, delegate the exercise of the GLA'S functions to the Executive Director of Resources and the Executive Director of Executive Director of Development, Enterprise & Environment as proposed.
- 6.5 Officers must ensure that an appropriate funding agreement is put in place between and executed by the GLA and any recipient before any commitment to fund is made.

7. Investment & Performance Board

The proposal was approved in principle at the 16 October 2014 IPB meeting.

8. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
All London Green Grid Delivery	
Project Call	Nov - Dec 2014
Project selection process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Panel sift Public opinion poll 	Dec 2014 Jan - Feb 2015
Negotiation of Funding Agreements with delivery bodies	March 2015
Delivery Start Date	April 2015
Evaluation	Ongoing evaluation by delivery agents and GLA chaired steering groups.
Delivery End Date:	March 2016
Project Closure:	April 2016
Community Tree-Planting	
Application process	June –September 2015
Assessment	October 2015
Delivery	Nov 2015 – Feb 2016

Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI Act) and will be made available on the GLA website within one working day of approval.

If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary. **Note:** This form (Part 1) will either be published within one working day after approval or on the defer date.

Part 1 Deferral:

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? NO

Part 2 Confidentiality: Only the facts or advice considered to be exempt from disclosure under the FOI Act should be in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form – NO

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Drafting officer to confirm the following (✓)

Drafting officer:

Lisa Pook has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following have been consulted on the final decision.

✓

Assistant Director/Head of Service:

Stephen Tate has reviewed the documentation and is satisfied for it to be referred to the Sponsoring Director for approval.

✓

Sponsoring Director:

Fiona Fletcher-Smith has reviewed the request and is satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.

✓

Mayoral Adviser:

Matthew Pencharz has been consulted about the proposal and agrees the recommendations.

✓

Advice:

The Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal.

✓

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES:

I confirm that financial and legal implications have been appropriately considered in the preparation of this report.

Signature

Date

CHIEF OF STAFF:

I am satisfied that this is an appropriate request to be submitted to the Mayor

Signature

Date