

# GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

## REQUEST FOR MAYORAL DECISION – MD2854

### Title: Building Strong Communities 2021-22 to 2022-23

#### Executive summary:

This MD seeks approval for expenditure relating to the Building Strong Communities mission that all Londoners should have access to a community hub by 2025.

This decision seeks approval to spend funds from the Team London, Communities & Social Policy (CSP) and Environment team budgets to support the mission. The expenditure is contained in the Building Strong Communities recovery mission budget envelope.

To achieve the mission ambition on community hubs, this decision seeks approval for expenditure across four sets of related programmatic activity to:

- enable Londoners to lead the recovery in their own communities
- amplify the voices of Londoners who have previously been unheard
- decrease loneliness and social isolation by developing community-led solutions that build feelings of belonging
- increase social integration between Londoners of different backgrounds and ages.

These four aims, together, seek to achieve the Building Strong Communities mission by developing the foundations upon which communities can come together to form hubs which best meet their needs.

#### Decision:

That the Mayor:

1. Approves expenditure of:
  - £1.453m (£876,000 in 2021-22 and £577,000 in 2022-23, comprising £1.353m from the Team London budget and £100,000 from the Environment team budget)
  - £535,000 (£255,000 in 2021-22 and £280,000 in 2022-23) from the CSP budget to support the outcomes of the Building Strong Communities mission as set out in this decision.
2. Delegates to the Assistant Director of Team London & Community Sport authority to approve detailed expenditure plans via an Assistant Director Decision form to the value of:
  - £70,000 for work to support civil society groups to use Londoners' voices to lead the recovery; this will build on the learning generated from the Festival of Ideas
  - £40,000 for work to support inclusive volunteering and removing barriers to volunteering for Londoners from under-represented groups.
3. Delegates to the Assistant Director of Team London & Community Sport authority to approve, without the need for a further Decision form, the delivery method for the Building Strong Communities grants programme, within the expenditure envelope in this form.

#### 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:

14/10/21

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

### **Decision required – supporting report**

#### **1. Introduction and background**

- 1.1. The Building Strong Communities (BSC) mission sets out the overarching goal and key aims for the GLA and strategic partners in supporting community-led and community-level recovery from COVID-19. The goal is that “By 2025 all Londoners will have access to a community hub ensuring they can volunteer, get support and build strong networks”.
- 1.2. Communities must be in the driving seat of how community hubs are created and what they look like. Community hubs will therefore take different forms in different areas, as they will need to be responsive to the particular needs and assets of local communities. Some hubs may be in the form of physical ‘bricks and mortar’ spaces, with the potential to positively reinforce other missions, including thriving high streets. Others may have a strong online presence for communities of interest dispersed across geographies. Hubs may also be comprised of networks of people supporting one another in local communities (without a dedicated building, for example). And, of course, hubs can also combine some or all of these characteristics together.
- 1.3. In all cases, for community hubs to emerge, communities will first need strong foundations of: local networks to support Londoners to lead the recovery, systems that enable unheard Londoners’ voices to influence change, and community-run activities that build a sense of belonging and feelings of connection. The four mission aims below are therefore stepping-stones to achieving the mission goal.
- 1.4. The aims will be supported by a set of dedicated programmes. Together they seek to achieve community hubs across London by strengthening the foundations of community life. The aims are to:
  - enable Londoners to lead the recovery in their own communities through hyperlocal, community-led activities working in particular with Londoners most affected by the pandemic
  - amplify the voices of Londoners who have previously been unheard, working with organisations experienced in working with communities to effect change
  - decrease loneliness and social isolation, by developing community-led solutions that build feelings of belonging, including cross-generational work, peer support and community hubs
  - increase social integration between Londoners of different backgrounds and ages by building connections within and across diverse communities.
- 1.5. MD2726 approved expenditure of up to £375,000 in 2020-21 for initial BSC projects. Those projects included mutual aid and hyperlocal volunteering support, support for social enterprise and community businesses, and the Mayor of London Volunteering Awards 2020 to recognise charities’ and volunteers’ roles through COVID-19. This decision seeks permission for expenditure to continue this work.
- 1.6. This MD seeks approval to spend:
  - £1,353,000 of Team London funds (consisting of £1,264,000 from the 2021-22 budget, £20,000 from 2022-23, and £69,000 funds carried forward from the 2020-21 budget previously approved under cover of MD2591)
  - £535,000 of Communities & Social Policy funds (consisting of £255,000 in 2021-22, and £280,000 in 2022-23 subject to budget approval for that financial year)
  - £100,000 from the Environment Programme budget, specifically from the “Inclusive Green Space” project budget (consisting of £50,000 in 2021-22, and £50,000 in 2022-23 subject to budget

approval for that financial year), for projects that support the aims of the Building Strong Communities mission outcomes, as outlined in the table below:

	<b>Total spend</b>	<b>Total in financial year 2021-22</b>	<b>Total in financial year 2022-23</b>
<b>Enable Londoners to lead the recovery:</b>	<b>£259,000</b>	<b>£239,000</b>	<b>£20,000</b>
Civic Strength Index	£50,000	£50,000	
Using Londoners' voices to lead the recovery: Festival of Ideas follow-on	£70,000	£70,000	
Support for civil society infrastructure organisations	£139,000	£119,000	£20,000
<b>Amplify voices of Londoners:</b>	<b>£1,154,000</b>	<b>£597,000</b>	<b>£557,000</b>
BSC grants	£1,114,000	£557,000	£557,000
Volunteer equity and inclusion	£40,000	£40,000	
<b>Decrease loneliness and social isolation:</b>	<b>£485,000</b>	<b>£205,000</b>	<b>£280,000</b>
Civil Society Roots grants	£245,000	£65,000	£180,000
Civil Society Roots - commissioned organisation	£35,000	£35,000	
Improving Social Integration - building connections and reducing loneliness	£205,000	£105,000	£100,000
<b>Increase social integration:</b>	<b>£90,000</b>	<b>£90,000</b>	
Volunteer recognition	£25,000	£25,000	
Team London Ambassadors and Major Events	£65,000	£65,000	
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,988,000</b>	<b>£1,131,000</b>	<b>£857,000</b>

#### Enable Londoners to lead the recovery

*Civic Strength Index: £50,000*

- 1.7. The London Civic Strength Index is a key pillar of the Building Strong Communities mission. Its purpose is to define civic strength across a range of indicators, which can be measured to give a picture of what contributes to strong communities across the capital. The index will support the mission in several ways. It will define what civic strength looks like and where it exists, including mapping existing physical and virtual community hubs. This will contribute to the overall evidence base and support the mission to target interventions related to community hubs. Finally, it will be used to assess the impact of the Building Strong Communities mission and contribute to the monitoring of mission outcomes.
- 1.8. The first iteration of the index will be published in September 2021, having been commissioned in March 2021. The index will set out the key domains of civic strength underpinned by datasets and analysis to measure these domains across the capital. After publication £50,000 will be used to build on the index, to ensure mission partners, civil society and communities can use the index and to support additional data gathering to address gaps. Index evidence will underpin strategic decisions taken by mission partners. The work will be undertaken through one or more procurement exercises, likely with specialist organisations.

*Festival of Ideas follow-up: £70,000*

- 1.9. From 28th June to 23rd July 2021, the GLA coordinated the London Festival of Ideas with partners, giving Londoners the opportunity to lead in COVID-19 recovery, which is a key aim of the mission. The Festival was made up of 104 community and partner-led events and conversations, and two Talk London discussion threads, with over 3,500 Londoners participating across the capital. The Festival of Ideas generated data and insights into what Londoners believe makes a strong community, what already exists, and what barriers there are to achieve it. The data will be available from September 2021.
- 1.10. The GLA will use the insights gained through the Festival of Ideas to ensure community hubs are grounded in the priorities and insights of communities and partners across the capital. The GLA will use this evidence to ascertain where investment can best support the work of civil society groups in ways that support the mission ambition on hubs. This may be through commissioning a service, supporting collaborative work or funding a pilot project to test an approach to community hubs, for example. Insights from the Festival of Ideas – including what Londoners want strong communities to look like – will be used to create and test ideas of how to create accessible community hubs, including community hub pilots. This MD seeks approval to delegate to the Assistant Director of Team London & Community Sport the authority to approve detailed expenditure plans to the value of £70,000 via an Assistant Director Decision (ADD), combining with the Volunteer Equity and Inclusion work (see below) if suitable. The ADD will be developed after the October final presentation of the data from the Festival of Ideas, allowing the proposal to take into account findings from communities and for the GLA to engage with partners for further collaboration around impact, geographical scope, scale, and reach. Expenditure proposals will only be taking forward if the insights gained confirm that they will be value for money.

*Support for civil society infrastructure organisations: £139,000*

- 1.11. In order to achieve the goal of every Londoner having access to a community hub by 2025, it is important that strong support organisations exist in London to convene the voluntary, community and funding sectors, lead debate and help shape change.
- 1.12. London Plus is the infrastructure organisation for London's civil society, and a key partner for the BSC mission. London Plus has played a key role during the COVID-19 pandemic and is a core partner to the Building Strong Communities mission. A grant of £40,000 to London Plus enables the GLA to support this key infrastructure organisation and contribute funding for the mission work they will carry out. This includes but is not limited to contributing to discussion and decision making on programme objectives as a member of the Building Strong Communities board, and bringing knowledge of their networks and opportunities for cross-sector working to the mission. They will also contribute to the London Strategic Volunteering group which convenes regional partners to champion and promote volunteering. London Plus will also act as a conduit between volunteer centre and CVS networks and wider strategic partners across multiple mission projects.
- 1.13. London Plus is being granted this funding as they are unique in terms of their network of civil society organisations and ability to present a collective voice of the sector. Grant funding will be awarded for a two-year period, with £20,000 being payable in 2021-22 and a further £20,000 the following financial year in accordance with the GLA Contracts and Funding Code.
- 1.14. London Funders is the sole membership network for London's funders and social investors. Membership provides access to a wide portfolio of expertise and resources, including vital opportunities to network and collaborate with 170+ London-based funders across the public, private and social sectors. London Funders oversees the coordination of the London Community Response (LCR). LCR is a multi-agency collaboration, of which the GLA is a founding partner, that has to date distributed over £57m of pooled grant funding to support London's response to, and recovery from, COVID-19. The payment of £31,000 funds corporate GLA membership, and allows engagement by teams across the GLA. London Funders are the only organisation of their type therefore a Single Source Exception will be used to procure this membership. This expenditure uses funds approved as

carry forward for this purpose, from the Team London 2020-21 budget, originally approved under cover of MD2591.

- 1.15. In 2018, the GLA commissioned a review looking at the role of City Hall and its approach to giving. This culminated in the report "Harnessing the capital's giving – what is the role of the Mayor and Greater London Authority in enabling civic philanthropy" (September 2018). In 2020 all giving-related activity was put on hold and resources pivoted to support the pandemic response. This resulted in the establishment of LCR. As the focus of the LCR moves from crisis response to recovery there is a collective ambition to build on the learning and focus on future collaboration to support London's recovery, including this mission and the New Deal for Young People mission. The £68,000 will be used for related programme development costs, including grant funding to London Funders to support the design and coordination of future collaboration. As a specialist membership network of funders and investors in London's civil society they are uniquely placed to work in this area. This funding will be provided in accordance with the GLA Contracts and Funding Code. Of this expenditure, £38,000 comes from funds approved as carry forward for this purpose, from the Team London 2020-21 budget, originally approved under cover of MD2591.

### Amplify voices of unheard Londoners

#### *Building Strong Communities grants programme: £1.114m*

- 1.16. This fund is to support those communities that are being most adversely affected by COVID-19. It will contribute towards the mission by supporting small, community-led organisations to create opportunities for communities to come together. This will provide important foundational work leading towards the establishment of community hubs in areas of most need.
- 1.17. The GLA will invite potential grantees to submit applications for funding, which will be reviewed by a panel including GLA staff and stakeholders. The type of projects will be defined by the community and the group making the application. Examples could include celebrations and festivals, greening projects, cultural activities, campaigning, intergenerational activity, or work to support a need within the community. The GLA will ensure activities further the outcomes of the BSC mission. The Building Strong Communities Grants programme will be informed by learning from Wave 5 of the London Community Response. In turn, learning from the grants programme will help inform London Funders' ongoing discussions about longer term voluntary sector funding collaborations across London.
- 1.18. Officers will explore whether a grant management company will be contracted to manage the grants, or whether another stakeholder should act as grant manager on behalf of the GLA as part of a collaborative funding approach. Grant management costs will vary depending on the model adopted and the volume of applications, but the grant management approach will be selected to ensure value for money and efficient payments to grantees. Any money not used for support costs will be added to the balance of the grant fund. Officers will also take on board the findings of a current review of grant-making to shape the fund.
- 1.19. Meetings are planned to engage with stakeholders, including other funders, on the design and delivery of the programme. The Festival of Ideas will also inform the design. The aim is to launch in the Autumn, as set out in the Mayor's manifesto. Given the need to commence the programme as soon as possible, it is proposed that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director of Team London & Community Sport to approve a final delivery mechanism, without the need for a further decision form – provided this is within the overall budget envelope, highlighted above, and it aligns with the proposed objectives and outcomes as set out in this decision form.
- 1.20. This MD seeks approval for expenditure of £1.114m towards the BSC grants programme. This consists of £1.014m from the Team London 2021-22 budget; and £100,000 from the Environment budget (with £50,000 from the 2021-22 budget, and £50,000 from the 2022-23 budget). Expenditure is profiled as £557,000 in 2021-22 and £557,000 in 2022-23, allowing for three rounds of grants and additional built-in support for organisations, providing added value to grantees and strengthening their capacity.

1.21. The expenditure will consist of the following:

- Circa £900,000 to be awarded in the form of grant funding over three rounds (£260k – 300k per round) between December 2021 and September 2022, for delivery to be completed by Summer 2024:
  - up to 60 grants to be awarded as micro grants with values of between £1,000 and £5,000 per grant
  - up to 60 grants to be awarded as small grants with a value of up to £10,000 per grant
  - it is anticipated that between 110 - 120 grants will be awarded in total, but the ratio of small vs micro-grants may change once applications are assessed, should it be of benefit to the programme.
- Circa £100,000 of expenditure in the form of management fees to the organisation or grant management company appointed in accordance with the GLA Contracts and Funding Code.
- Up to £90,000 will be used to appoint specialist organisations to take on the role of supporting accessible grants for equity-focused groups. These organisations will be appointed in accordance with the GLA Contracts and Funding Code. Equity work acknowledges that individuals have differing requirements and allocates resource in a manner to achieve equal outcomes. The role of these organisations will include promoting the grants to groups that have been most adversely affected by COVID-19. This is to help ensure that the grants are accessible, and to increase the number of applications from these communities.
- Up to £24,000 of expenditure will be used for learning network sessions for grantees, and specialists will be appointed in accordance with the GLA Contracts and Funding Code. This might also include the provision of services by other grant funders who already provide funder-plus-type support. The GLA will convene two networking sessions a year to bring grantees together to share expertise and connect with specialists, including guest speakers and trainers, who will facilitate bespoke workshops at these sessions.

*Volunteer equity and inclusion work: £40,000*

- 1.22. Thriving community hubs will necessarily draw upon volunteers which means that supporting volunteering is a key element of achieving the mission. New models of volunteering emerged through the pandemic but there is still a need for partners to work together to ensure that volunteering, across the spectrum from informal to formal, is open, easy and accessible to all communities in London. In order to move towards the mission goal of every Londoner having access to a community hub by 2025 it is important that no one is excluded from participation in civic life and that all Londoners feel they can contribute to make a difference.
- 1.23. To be inclusive, community hubs will also need the full involvement of community groups led by Londoners with protected characteristics. However, community groups led by Londoners with protected characteristics face particular challenges. Reports from organisations such as Ubele (The Impact of Covid-19 on BAME-Led Community and Voluntary Organisations<sup>1</sup>) and Charity So White (The Impact of Covid on BAME Communities, 2020) outline the fragility of funding and sustainability for groups led by BAME Londoners. This is also the case for Deaf and Disabled People's organisations.
- 1.24. To address these two issues the GLA will work with partners, building on insights from the Festival of Ideas, to test approaches to supporting equity and inclusion in the civil society sector. This may be through work to support diversity on trustee boards, pilot programmes with partners to support inclusive volunteering or a more strategic approach to championing equity and inclusion that is co-

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<sup>1</sup> [REPORT+Impact+of+COVID-19++on+the+BAME+Community+and+voluntary+sector+--+A+Follow+Up.pdf \(squarespace.com\)](#)

designed with partners. This work will increase GLA and partner knowledge on more equitable approaches to community participation, which is a keystone to building inclusive community hubs.

- 1.25. This MD seeks approval to delegate to the Assistant Director of Team London & Community Sport the authority to approve detailed expenditure plans to the value of £40,000 for work to support equity and inclusion via an Assistant Director Decision form, combined with using Londoners voices to lead the recovery work if suitable.

#### Decrease loneliness and social isolation

*Civil Society Roots: £280,000*

- 1.26. For community hubs to be viable, communities first need their own local civil society to have the infrastructure and capacity to meet the needs of local people. The Civil Society Roots programme aims to make strategic interventions to support the development of London's civil society through innovative funding and support models. The third phase of Civil Society Roots will use existing evidence and current BSC mission activity to identify areas and communities where there are civic 'cold spots'. Civic cold spots are areas where civil society – including vibrant local voluntary and community organisations - appears to be less well developed or lacking. A budget of £35,000 (in 2021-22) will be used to procure one or more organisations with specialist knowledge. These organisations will support the development of community-led partnerships to fill the cold spots identified.
- 1.27. This will be followed by a grant programme of £245,000 (£65,000 in 2021-22 and £180,000 in 2022-23). This will provide grant funding to groups to design evidence-based models that will continue to develop civil society capacity in cold spots. Conversations are currently ongoing with external funders to investigate the possibility of additional funding to increase the grant pot. Initial plans are to award grant funding to two or three collaboratives of groups, but this will change should external funding be secured.

*Improving social integration – building connections and reducing loneliness: £205,000*

- 1.28. Community hubs cannot be fully inclusive if some local people are too socially isolated or lonely to engage with them. This means that building local social connections and reducing loneliness are key priorities contributing towards community hubs across London. A budget of £205,000 (£105,000 in 2021-22 and £100,000 in 2022-23) will go towards working with key partners, in particular local authorities, to support targeted interventions that directly focus on social integration and reducing loneliness. This will not only make an immediate impact on loneliness exacerbated by the pandemic but will also strengthen how boroughs build social relationships in local areas in most need, thus developing a strong foundation towards achieving the mission goal.
- 1.29. The pandemic has brought to light the fundamental importance of connections and relationships in sustaining healthy and resilient communities. While some areas did experience an upsurge in community action, evidence suggests this was not consistent across London. Emerging evidence also shows lockdowns and social distancing measures resulted in increased levels of loneliness and isolation, especially among those who have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.
- 1.30. Procurement exercises will be completed, supported by TfL procurement and in accordance with the GLA Contracts and Funding Code to appoint delivery partners for the below:
  - Expenditure of up to £170,000 on a two-year design lab programme for up to 10-15 London boroughs, enabling them to embed social integration principles into policy and practice. This will resource a mapping/scoping exercise; co-design of the programme with boroughs; programme delivery and production of resources; and recommendations for next steps to support all London boroughs.
  - Expenditure of up to £55,000 towards implementing the recommendations of recent loneliness research (approved under ADD2504). This targeted sector support is expected to include

establishment of a London-wide network; facilitated network events; and resources for funders and organisations working to address loneliness. This will reduce loneliness in London and build relationships between Londoners through an evidence-based approach.

### Increase social integration

*Team London Ambassadors and major events: £65,000*

- 1.31. Team London has delivered an annual Team London Ambassador (Visitor Welcome) volunteering programme every summer since 2012, providing accessible and rewarding volunteering opportunities and contributing to London's reputation as a welcoming city. In addition this programme provides resilience volunteers to London; in the past, it has deployed volunteers to Grenfell and the NHS Nightingale at the Excel Centre. This programme continues to be a Mayoral priority in the context of 'Let's Do London' and other work to promote London to visitors, as well as to mobilise volunteers – at short notice – to support resilience efforts.
- 1.32. In 2021 a scaled-down version of the programme will deploy up to 400 volunteers at eight tourist locations over the long weekends of the UK summer school holiday period. The programme has been designed to: support the recovery of London's tourism industry, align with the "Let's Do London" Campaign; and prioritise volunteer health and safety, considering the ongoing pandemic. Team London will continue to work with partners in the NHS to provide volunteers from the Ambassador and Major Events programme to support the delivery of the COVID-19 vaccination centres.
- 1.33. A total of £29,000 will be used for programme delivery costs, such as risk assessments, volunteer expenses, maps and COVID-19 safety measures. A total of £36,000 will be used for programme management, temporary staff and the volunteer management system. Expenditure will use GLA commercial processes. These resources will also be used for the major events programme, through which volunteers support events such as the London Marathon and the New Year's Eve fireworks, as well as for the deployment of volunteers who support London when incidents require.

*Volunteer recognition – thank you campaign: £25,000*

- 1.34. People across London have made a vital contribution to communities over the last year by giving their time formally or informally as volunteers. The last survey of Londoners showed that around 28 per cent of adults in London volunteer formally (giving unpaid help to a not-for-profit organisation or cause in a structured way) at least once a year; and 53 per cent volunteer informally (defined as giving unpaid help to a person who is not a family member). In the context of creating community hubs across London, which are likely to rely on the support of volunteers, high profile recognition of volunteering by the Mayor continues to be a priority for this mission.
- 1.35. Research has shown that an important driver for continued civic participation is seeing the impact that one has made and feeling appreciated (NCVO Time Well Spent Report). For the past eight years the GLA has held the annual Mayor of London Volunteering Awards to recognise volunteers' outstanding contribution to our communities. In 2021 the Mayor will recognise and thank all volunteers who have given their time to communities over the last year. This will raise the profile of volunteering, enable the Mayor to show his support for volunteering and enable small charities and organisations to show appreciation for their volunteers.
- 1.36. The GLA will deliver a thank you campaign to recognise the contribution and impact of volunteers and volunteering on the capital, working with volunteering networks and stakeholders. This will comprise of a social media campaign and the distribution of thank you cards to volunteers, sourced in accordance with the GLA Contracts and Funding Code.

## **2. Objectives and expected outcomes**

- 2.1. Project officers are working with the GLA Intelligence team to develop a common outcome evaluation framework that can be applied across all programmes in the mission. Key indicators will be identified



for sense of belonging, participation, voice and collaboration, which will be used to measure impact across all relevant programmes. The BSC mission team will share these common outcomes with strategic partners so that they too can utilise the same measures. This will enable impact measurement to be aggregated across programmes to track progress towards the mission goal. This work will draw from the Civic Strength Index, as outlined in 1.5.

2.2. Objectives and outcomes for the BSC mission include:

Objectives and outcomes	Total spend
<b>Enable Londoners to lead the recovery:</b>	<b>£259,000</b>
<p><i>Civic Strength Index</i> To build on the first iteration of the index (due to published September 2021) to further develop the index and ensure it captures all relevant evidence on civic strength. The index will enable the GLA and partners to measure progress towards the mission goal. It will improve understanding of the factors contributing to civic strength in London, measure its distribution across the capital (geographically and by community) and better enable city-wide resources to be directed.</p>	£50,000
<p><i>Using Londoners' voices to lead the recovery: Festival of Ideas follow-on</i> To use the findings from the London Festival of Ideas to design and deliver initiatives with partners that will strengthen communities in ways that will enable community hubs to flourish. This will strengthen understanding of Londoners' priorities for their communities and enable these insights to influence both civil society organisations and the development of community hubs.</p>	£70,000
<p><i>Support for civil society infrastructure organisations</i> To support the volunteer infrastructure of the capital, enabling a more diverse range of Londoners to get involved with volunteering and social action, which in turn will enable community hubs to thrive. This support will strengthen relationships with London's funding community across all sectors and types/size of funders, address recommendations in the Mayor's philanthropy review, build on the success of LCR, and work with external partners to identify opportunities to maximise investment and support towards London's recovery.</p>	£139,000
<b>Amplify the voices of unheard Londoners:</b>	<b>£1,154,000</b>
<p><i>BSC grants</i> This fund will provide small grants and micro-grants to charities and community-led organisations in communities most adversely affected by COVID-19. It will contribute towards the mission by supporting small, community-led organisations to create opportunities for communities to come together. This will enable Londoners to have increased voice and agency in shaping recovery in their own communities - so that community hubs and other recovery activities meet local needs. This also supports work related to The Mayor's Action Plan for Transparency, Accountability and Trust in Policing.</p>	£1,114,000
<p><i>Volunteer equity and inclusion</i> To use the findings from the London Festival of Ideas to support work that increases equity and inclusion in volunteering and participation. This will increase the range of volunteering roles available and improve volunteering experiences, particularly for under-represented groups. This will be critical to creating inclusive and thriving community hubs, as well as belonging and connections more broadly.</p>	£40,000
<b>Decrease loneliness and social isolation:</b>	<b>£485,000</b>
<p><i>Civil Society Roots grants</i> To create community-led innovations that ensure under-represented communities feel valued and that they have influence and control over local and London-wide decisions. This will contribute towards community hubs by increasing community strength, supporting collaborations that are community-led, raising the voices of</p>	£280,000

those who are unheard, and supporting collaborations between those ‘in power’ and community-led organisations.	
<i>Improving social integration – building connections and reducing loneliness</i> To work closely with local authorities and borough partners, including Councils for Voluntary Service, funders and statutory bodies, to increase understanding of social integration in ways that will lead to more inclusive community hubs. The work will develop sustainable methods of improving social integration at a local level, with specific efforts to decrease loneliness and social isolation. It will build relationships between Londoners and provide local authorities and institutions with levers for change, and foster social integration at a local level in ways that will support the development of community hubs. Londoners will have higher feelings of local belonging and be less lonely and isolated; communities will be more connected, healthy and resilient to recovery from COVID-19 and future shocks.	£205,000
<b>Increase social integration:</b>	<b>£90,000</b>
<i>Volunteer recognition</i> To deliver an activity that publicly acknowledges the valuable contribution that volunteers make to London’s communities. This will raise the profile of diverse volunteers and the full scope of volunteering achievements, highlighting the difference that volunteering can make in increasing feelings of belonging, social connection and making a difference. It will contribute towards the mission aims of community hubs by championing volunteering upon which community hubs will rely.	£25,000
<i>Team London Ambassadors and major events</i> To provide quality volunteering opportunities to 500 volunteers and recruit a volunteer workforce that reflects the diversity of London. This will increase volunteers’ feelings of belonging, sense of civic pride and wellbeing as well as reducing social isolation. The work will contribute to the resilience and recovery of London by supporting areas such as COVID-19 vaccination centres. It will add value to the “Let’s Do London” campaign and London’s tourism industry, which are Mayoral priorities for London’s recovery.	£65,000

### 3. Equality comments

- 3.1. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, as a public authority, the GLA must have ‘due regard’ of the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 3.2. The BSC mission recognises the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on London’s diverse communities. It embraces London’s diversity and fosters good relations by bringing Londoners from a variety of backgrounds together in support of common causes, amplifying their voices and allowing them to play an active role in recovery from COVID-19. By promoting and championing volunteering and social action programmes, this will increase the opportunities for Londoners to play an active role in their communities. A recurring theme amongst the programmes set out within this decision is equity – that these programmes are designed to provide means that will advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, acknowledges that support requirements may differ between groups, and provides that support.
- 3.3. Team London previously commissioned research to look at the barriers and challenges involved in enabling Londoners to participate in volunteering. This was to ensure that volunteering and social action programmes are structured in a way that is as appealing and accessible as possible. The programme to support inclusive volunteering will build on this research to strengthen good practice in involving diverse communities in volunteering; and, thus, ensure that volunteering is open to all. The Survey of Londoners showed that volunteering and social action participation improves social integration. As such, increasing accessibility of programmes will improve rates of social integration experienced by volunteers.

- 3.4. The Community Grants programme will fund equity partners to support promotion of the grants to their networks. This will help to ensure that groups most adversely affected by COVID-19 are encouraged to apply for the grants. The GLA will define a target percentage of the awards to be distributed to equity-led groups. These organisations will specifically support access to organisations run by, and supporting those with, protected characteristics. This will include but is not limited to organisations with access to LGBTQ+ networks, faith networks, disability networks, and networks for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Londoners.
- 3.5. Civil Society Roots will aim to identify and work with actors in specific areas/communities across the capital. A targeted community-led intervention will support the development of a sustainable equity-led civil society infrastructure, contribute to building strong communities and advancing equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. The evidence review will build on evidence gathered via ongoing programmes that are taking place as part of the BSC mission, which is underpinned by the principle of being led by those communities that have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. The programme will focus on supporting projects addressing structural inequalities in its work with areas/communities and distributes funding.
- 3.6. The Civic Strength Index will aim to improve understanding of domains of civic strength and their distribution across the capital (geographically and by community). The domains have been developed through a range of engagement exercises with the steering group, stakeholders and communities; and the next iteration will take the same approach.
- 3.7. Projects will decrease loneliness and social isolation and build relationships between Londoners. They will have a specific focus on groups disproportionately impacted by the pandemic; on hidden loneliness within London's diverse communities; and approaches to remove the barriers to connection for these groups. The programme will encourage people from protected groups to participate in public life, thus fostering good relationships between those who share protected characteristics and those who do not.

#### 4. Other considerations

##### *Key risks and issues*

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigating action</b>	<b>Risk rating: Red/Amber/Green</b>
The Community Grants programme does not reach community and equity-led organisations.	The GLA will work with equity partners to promote the grants to their networks. Team London will collaborate with other teams in the GLA to support joint efforts on grant promotion. There is a strong network of community partners who will be able to help promote the grants.	Green
The community grants do not contribute to the outcomes of the BSC mission.	Team London will define criteria for the grants and develop guidelines that clearly articulate the expectations of contributing towards mission outcomes. The team will work with a grant management organisation to ensure that the criteria is clearly defined and will provide a monitoring and evaluation framework for grantees to measure impact against outcomes.	Green
The intended reach to small organisations, in recognising volunteers, is not achieved.	The GLA will work with strategic partners, networks, funders and local authorities to promote the campaign as widely as possible.	Amber

<p>The work to amplify Londoners' voices does not have an impact on supporting organisations to achieve outcomes for Londoners.</p>	<p>The CSP and Team London teams will draw on the findings from the Festival of Ideas to ensure the work is grounded in the sector's needs. The programme will work in collaboration with key stakeholders to maximise the impact of the programme.</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>The volunteer equity and inclusion work does not make an impact in supporting BSC outcomes.</p>	<p>The GLA will work with key partners to design the equity and inclusion work. The team will ground the work in an evidence base drawn from the Festival of Ideas and wider sector intelligence.</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>Limited time to develop meaningful, collaborative partnerships alongside stakeholders with varying priorities and budgeting/approval timelines.</p>	<p>The GLA is working closely with external partners and mission chairs to align activity and set out a clear programme plan and timeline.</p>	<p>Amber</p>
<p>Changes to the easing of COVID-19 restrictions could impact on aspects of the Team London Ambassador programme delivery. Volunteers may lack confidence to attend their shifts if the virus is still spreading.</p>	<p>COVID-19 safety measures have been planned into the design and delivery of the programme. These include, for example, public health and safety information in volunteer training and communications; face coverings and hand sanitiser provided at pods; and risk assessments, which will cover COVID-19 related mitigations. The GLA is running a scaled-down version of the programme to ensure delivery can be as safe as possible. There are measures in place to quickly stand down shifts if required.</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>Delays to the first iteration of the Civic Strength Index preventing design and delivery on the second iteration.</p>	<p>The GLA is working with the commissioned partner to ensure the first iteration is delivered within the agreed timeframes through regular engagement. The GLA has been working with a cross-sector steering group to design the work at each phase. This also ensures oversight of what will be included in the first iteration, to allow planning for the second iteration to begin.</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>Civil Society Roots does not target areas with clear needs for equity-led civil society support.</p>	<p>Stage one of the project will be an evidence review. The areas chosen will be identified through a review of a wide range of evidence, including the civic strength index, insights from the Festival of Ideas and historic funding data. This will ensure the target areas have clear needs for equity-led civil society support.</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>The social integration design lab may not obtain buy-in from boroughs, and the programme will not achieve its aims.</p>	<p>The initial mapping, scoping and co-design work will ensure boroughs are brought on board and the programme is relevant for them. The GLA has already established a track record that ensures local authorities appreciate the value of taking part in such a programme.</p>	<p>Green</p>

4.1. The workstreams will support the BSC mission by:

- supporting Londoners at a local level to lead recovery in their communities
- working with partners to build hyper-local action, networks and knowledge to create resilience, particularly in those communities most impacted by COVID-19
- building feelings of belonging by exploring and promoting the implementation of community-led solutions (for example, through mutual aid support and social infrastructure)
- reducing loneliness and isolation and increasing connections and networks within and across communities.

4.2. These programmes also support the cross-cutting principles of collaborating and involving London's diverse communities, and addressing structural inequalities.

4.3. The Community Grants programme will also be contributing to the Green New Deal mission by supporting local grassroots activities. The Environment team has contributed funding to this mission and will be a key part of the programme board.

4.4. The Social Integration programme will also be contributing to the Mental Health and Wellbeing mission by addressing loneliness and social isolation in London, which has been exacerbated by the impact of the pandemic.

#### *Mayoral strategies and priorities*

4.5. This work aligns with statutory and Mayoral strategies by:

- working with communities and civil society groups across London to encourage active participation in community and civic life; this means supporting Londoners of all ages to volunteer and to take action to improve the city, and links to the recommendations in the culture strategy and the sport and physical activity strategy
- encouraging more Londoners to get involved in volunteering for, and connecting with, others in their community, supporting the aims and objectives of the social integration strategy, the equality, diversity and inclusion strategy, and the health inequalities strategy
- inspiring young people to foster valuable life skills by becoming active citizens in their local area, and bringing communities together in a way that is now more important than ever, building on the recommendations in the skills strategy
- deploying volunteers to roles in visitor welcome to support the work of the "Let's Do London" campaign, thus contributing to the recovery of London's tourism industry and its reputation as a welcoming city.

4.6. The work within this mission also aligns with areas of the Mayor's Action Plan for Transparency, Accountability and Trust in Policing. This action plan has building better relationships with communities as a key objective for both the Metropolitan Police Service and MOPAC. This work is based on volunteer-led community engagement, with a particular focus on Black and mixed ethnicity communities.

#### *Conflict of interest*

4.7. Due consideration has been given to any conflict of interest (that may arise), including from those involved in the drafting and/or clearance of this decision form. None have been found to exist except for those noted below.

4.8. A GLA officer for the BSC programme has a trustee officer role at London Plus, an organisation the BSC mission works closely with. This officer has recused themselves from GLA decision-making in

relation to this organisation, where relevant. Another officer has a trustee role at London Funders; but represents the GLA in that role, as one of their strategic partners, so this does not constitute a conflict of interest.

- 4.9. If any conflicts of interest arise during the delivery of the programme (i.e. a GLA officer has links with an organisation that applies for a grant), they will declare that interest and not take any part in assessing that grant application or awarding funding to that organisation.

## 5. Financial comments

- 5.1. Approval is sought for expenditure of up to £1.988m on Building Strong Communities mission projects spanning over two financial years, as detailed in the table in paragraph 1.6 and summarised below.

Workstream	Approval for expenditure in 2021-22	Approval for expenditure in 2022-23	TOTAL
Enable Londoners to lead the recovery	£239,000	£20,000	£259,000
Amplify voices of unheard Londoners	£597,000	£557,000	£1,154,000
Decrease loneliness and social isolation	£205,000	£280,000	£485,000
Increase social integration	£90,000		£90,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,131,000</b>	<b>£857,000</b>	<b>£1,988,000</b>

- 5.2. The overall expenditure approval is also seeking delegated approval to the Assistant Director of Team London & Community Sport authority to approve detailed expenditure plans in relation to:

- £70,000 for work to support civil society groups to use Londoners' voices to lead the recovery; and
- £40,000 for work to support inclusive volunteering and removing barriers to volunteering for Londoners from under-represented groups.

- 5.3. Both are included within the 2021-22 overall expenditure.

- 5.4. The below table details the funding sources for the total expenditure of £1.988m.

Funding Sources	2021-22 Budget	2022-23 Budget	2020-21 Carry Forward Budget	TOTAL
Team London & Community Sport	£1,264,000	£20,000	£69,000	£1,353,000
CSP	£250,000	£280,000	£5,000	£535,000
Environment	£50,000	£50,000		£100,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,564,000</b>	<b>£350,000</b>	<b>£74,000</b>	<b>£1,988,000</b>

- 5.5. Approval of the carry forward budget totalling £0.074m into 2021-22 is being requested and will be recorded through the 2021-22 Quarterly Performance review process. Approval is also sought for the reprofile of the Team London & Community Sport 2021-22 Building Strong Communities Grants

programme budget of £0.507m into 2022-23 (as detailed in paragraph 1.20). Funding for 2022-23 is subject to the Authority's budget setting and carry forward processes for that year.

5.6. The workstreams being approved within this decision all sit within the 'Building Stronger Communities' mission.

## **6. Legal comments**

6.1. The foregoing sections of this report indicate that:

6.1.1. the decisions requested of the Mayor concern the exercise of the GLA's general powers, falling 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

6.1.2. 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 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 toward the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom
- consult with appropriate bodies.

6.2. In taking the decisions requested, the Mayor must have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty; namely the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, and to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (race, disability, sex, age, sexual orientation, religion) and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). To this end, the Mayor should have regard to section 3 (above) of this report.

6.3. The Mayor may, under section 38 of the Act, delegate the exercise of the GLA's functions to the Assistant Director of Team London and Community Sport as proposed.

6.4. Paragraphs 1.12 and 1.14 above indicates that the contribution of funding to London Plus and London Funders respectively will amount to the provision of grant funding and not payment for services. Officers have set out at paragraphs 1.12 to 1.14 above how they have complied with the requirements of the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code. Officers must ensure that appropriate funding agreements are put in place between and executed by the GLA and recipients before any commitment to fund is made.

6.5. Paragraphs 1.21 and 1.27 above indicates that the contribution of funding as part of the Building Strong Communities and Civil Society Roots grant programmes will amount to the provision of grant funding and not payment for services. Officers must ensure any funding is distributed fairly, transparently, in accordance with the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code. Officers must also ensure that appropriate funding agreements are put in place between and executed by the GLA and recipients before any commitment to fund is made.

6.6. Any services required by the GLA described in this report must be procured with the assistance of the Transport for London procurement team in accordance with the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code. Officers must ensure that appropriate contract documentation is put in place and executed by the successful bidder(s) and the GLA before the commencement of the services.

## 7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

### *Community grants programme*

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Procurement of grant management company	Autumn 2021
Launch of round one of the grants programme	Autumn 2021
Grantees begin project delivery	February – April (tbc) 2022
Round two of grants launched	January – March (tbc) 2022
Round three of grants launched	April – June (tbc) 2022
Final small grants complete delivery	August 2023
Final evaluation finish	September 2023
Delivery end date	September 2023
Project closure	September 2023

### *Recognition of volunteering work*

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Delivery planning begins	August 2021
Announcement	October 2021
Key volunteer recognition date	December 2021

### *Civil Society support work*

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Design programme	September – October 2021
Launch	December 2021/January 2022
Delivery start date	January 2022
Delivery end date	June 2022
Final evaluation	July 2022

### *Volunteer equity and inclusion work*

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Design programme	August/September 2021
Launch	October 2021
Delivery start date	November 2021
Delivery end date	February 2022
Final evaluation	March 2022

### *Giving*

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Scoping exercise and stakeholder engagement	August – October 2021
Decision on next steps	November 2021
Announcement – subject to scoping and decision	January 2022
Launch	March 2022

### *Team London Ambassadors and major events*

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Volunteer recruitment, selection and training	May – July 2021
Deployment of Ambassador programme	August/September 2021
Volunteer feedback sessions and recognition	September/October 2021
Major events planning and deployment	September 2021 – March 2022

### *Civic Strength Index*



<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
First iteration published	September 2021
Design of second year of programme	October 2021
Procurement exercise(s)	December 2021
Delivery of second iteration	March 2022

*Civil Society Roots*

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Procurement exercise(s)	September 2021
Evidence review	September 2021
Partnership-building programme	October/December 2021
Grant programme launched	January 2022

*Improving social integration*

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Design lab mapping and recommendations	September 2021
Co-design of programme	September 2021
Delivery of design labs	October 2021 – October 2022
Implementation of recommendations of the loneliness research, commissioned and developed with sector partners	October 2021 – March 2022
Production of resources and recommendations for next steps for the design lab	October 2022

**Appendices and supporting papers:**

None.

**Public access to information**

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) 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 it has been approved or on the defer date.

**Part 1 - Deferral****Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? YES**

If YES, for what reason: In order to gain market value from procurement exercises publication is requested to be withheld until January 2022

Until what date: 31 January 2022

**Part 2 – Sensitive information**

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under FoIA should be included 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:**

Karen Reed has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

**Sponsoring Director:**

Sarah Mulley has reviewed the request and is satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.

✓

**Mayoral Adviser:**

Debbie Weekes-Bernard has been consulted about the proposal and agrees the recommendations.

✓

**Advice:**

The Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal.

✓

**Corporate Investment Board**

This decision was agreed by the Corporate Investment Board on 16 August 2021.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES:**

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

**Signature**

*D. Gane*

**Date**

7 October 2021

**CHIEF OF STAFF:**

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

**Signature**

*D. Bellamy*

**Date**

13 October 2021