

REQUEST FOR MAYORAL DECISION – MD479

Title: Thames Estuary Airport Steering Group

Executive Summary:

- This MD seeks to authorise the establishment of a Thames Estuary Airport Steering Group and the appointment of a Chair and Members of the Steering Group.
- The Steering Group will be tasked to oversee further consideration of and studies on the use of the Thames Estuary following the completion of a technical review on the feasibility of building and operating an International Hub Airport within the Thames Estuary. Issues such as climate change, flood management, renewable energy, environment and ecology, regeneration, shipping, road and rail links, and aviation will need to be properly considered when determining any future use of the Thames Estuary.
- The Chair and Members of the Steering Group will not be remunerated, however reasonable out-of-pocket expenses (travel/incidentals) and meeting costs will be paid from the GLA budget.

Decision:

The Mayor's approval is sought to:

- (i) Establish the Thames Estuary Airport Steering Group;
- (ii) Task the Steering Group to oversee further consideration of and studies on the use of the Thames Estuary following the completion of a technical review on the feasibility of building and operating an International Hub Airport within the Thames Estuary. Issues such as climate change, flood management, renewable energy, environment and ecology, regeneration, shipping, road and rail links, and aviation will need to be properly considered when determining any future use of the Thames Estuary;
- (iii) Appoint Sir David King as Chair of the Steering Group;
- (iv) Approve the appointment of the individuals listed in Section 5 to the Steering Group;
- (v) Allow for the Steering Group to recommend to the Mayor the appointment of new members to the Steering Group;
- (vi) Request that the Steering Group at its first meeting finalise its Terms of Reference for approval by the Mayor; and
- (vii) Provide secretariat and administrative support to the Steering Group.
- (viii) Approve all budget adjustments
- (ix) Approve the transfer of £1,000 from the centralised programme budget to the Development & Environment Programme Budget.

Mayor of London

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

It is the vision of the Mayor that London excels among global cities – expanding opportunities for all its peoples and enterprises, achieving the highest environmental standards and quality of life and leading the world in its approach to tackling urban challenges of the 21st century. Through the London Plan, the Mayor intends to set out an integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of the capital over the next 20–25 years. In reviewing the London plan, there is a recognition that: *“...further runway capacity will be needed in the South East to meet London’s needs; emphasise sustainable airport operations; resist the provision of further capacity at Heathrow; refer to work being carried out to evaluate alternatives elsewhere in the south east, including exploring the possibility of a Thames Estuary airport. [...] London’s Economy and quality of life depend to a significant extent on the capacity and range of its strategic transport networks.”*

In November 2008, the Mayor asked Douglas E. Oakervee to consider the feasibility of building and operating an International Hub Airport capable of 24 hours operation within the Thames Estuary. The Mayor also requested that the feasibility study took into account the review of the London Plan that is currently underway.

The feasibility review was undertaken between June 2009 and August 2009.

The report recognised that a holistic approach is needed when looking at any future use of the Thames Estuary. Issues such as climate change, Thames Barrier, renewable energy, the environment and ecology, regeneration, road and rail transport links, shipping and ports, and aviation need to be considered.

It has been identified that the remit of the feasibility review needs to be extended by taking into account all potential uses for the Thames Estuary and the plans other stakeholders have in mind. The report concluded that further studies are needed to maintain the development of London’s infrastructure and the safety of the region around the Thames Estuary. The report concluded that while “there are no overwhelming constraints to building an airport in the Estuary, we are not yet in a position to decide when or how or exactly where it should or could be built”.

The report recommended the establishment of a working group to oversee further consideration of and studies on the use of the Thames Estuary in order that optimum solutions to energy, flood management, transport, ecological and regeneration are achieved. At the meeting of 7 August 2009 between the Mayor, Deputy Mayor Kit Malthouse and Douglas Oakervee, the Mayor agreed to the establishment of a working group.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Mayor approve the establishment of the Thames Estuary Airport Steering Group to oversee further consideration of and studies on the use of the Thames Estuary.

The Chair and Members of the Steering Group will not be remunerated, however reasonable out-of-pocket expenses (travel/incidentals) and meeting costs will be paid from the GLA budget. It is recommended that such costs be capped at £1,000 per annum.

The GLA will also be providing secretariat and administrative support for the Steering Group by using existing staff resources.

2. Issues for consideration

a) Links to strategies and Strategic Plan

The work of the Thames Estuary Airport Steering Group will be linked to the review of the London Plan that is underway. Page 63 of *A New Plan for London (April 2009)* states:

“In reviewing the London Plan the Mayor proposes to support strategic rail services – international, inter-regional, domestic for commuters, services within London – and high-speed rail hubs; and support improved public transport access to ports, rail termini and airports; and recognise that further runway capacity will be needed in the South East to meet London’s needs; emphasise sustainable airport operations; resist the provision of further capacity at Heathrow; refer to work being carried out to evaluate alternatives elsewhere in the south east, including exploring the possibility of a Thames Estuary airport; and continue the current policy approach to heliports.”

b) Impact assessments and Consultation

The recommendation to establish a Steering Group stems from a feasibility review completed by Douglas Oakervee between June 2009 and August 2009. During the review, assistance and advice were received from various professionals on a pro bono basis. However, it has been concluded that the original remit of the feasibility review needs to be expanded to take account of issues such as climate change, flood management, renewable energy, environment and ecology, regeneration, shipping, road and rail links, and aviation. It will be the task of the proposed Steering Group to oversee further studies and research – including an assessment of impacts. It is anticipated that the proposed Steering Group would be consulting with various stakeholders.

c) Risk

The risks associated with the establishment of the Steering Group is low given that further studies and research are required when considering any future use of the Thames Estuary.

3. Financial Comments

The Chair and the Members of the Steering Group will not be remunerated. The GLA may be required to reimburse reasonable out-of-pocket expenses such as travel, incidentals and costs associated with meetings which will not be more than £1,000.

All expense claims should be in line with the Expenses and Benefits Framework.

The GLA will also be providing secretariat and administrative support for the Steering Group by using existing staff resources.

The £1,000 budget is currently contained within the centralised programme budget and will need to be transferred to the Development & Environment Directorate.

The Development & Environment Directorate will monitor the spend.

All budget adjustments will be made.

4. Legal Comments

Establishment of the Thames Estuary Airport Steering Group

- 4.1 Under section 30 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 (“the Act”), the Mayor is entitled to do anything that he considers will further one or more of the principal purposes of the Authority. These are set out in section 30(1) of the Act and comprise the promotion in Greater London of economic development and wealth creation, social development and the improvement of the environment.
- 4.2 The establishment of the Thames Estuary Airport Steering Group (the “Steering Group”) may reasonably be viewed as promoting economic and social development in Greater London as it will allow for scrutiny of the feasibility of an international airport in the Thames estuary. As set out in paragraph 1 above, the proposed airport would have an impact on the capacity and range of Greater London’s strategic transport networks.

Use of GLA Resources

- 4.3 Section 34 of the Act allows the Authority, acting by the Mayor, to do anything that is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the exercise of any functions of the Authority exercisable by the Mayor. The provision of administrative and secretarial support to the Steering Group is incidental to the Mayor’s carrying out his powers under s.30 of the Act, as set out in paragraph 4.1 above.

5. Background/supporting papers

Proposed Composition of the Steering Group:

Sir David King, Chair	Kit Malthouse AM
Douglas Oakervee	Nick Raynsford MP
Bernard Jenkin MP	Sir Terry Farrell
Bridget Rosewell	David Quarmby
Graham Plant	Alexander Johnston

Public access to information

Information in this form is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI Act) and other legislation. Part 1 of this form will be made available on the Greater London Authority website within 1 working day of approval. Any facts and advice that should not be made automatically available on request should not be included in Part 1 but instead on the separate Part 2 form. Deferment is only applicable where release before that date would compromise the implementation of the decision being approved.

Is the publication of this approval to be deferred? NO

If yes, for what reason:

Until what date:
Is there a part 2 form - NO

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Tick to indicate 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 Advisor:

Sir Simon Milton has been consulted about the proposal and agrees the recommendations.

✓

Head of Law:

John Benson has commented on this proposal on behalf of the Head of Law.

✓

OFFICER APPROVAL**Executive Director, Resources**

I have been consulted about the proposal and confirm that Financial and Legal advice have been taken into account 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