

## REQUEST FOR DIRECTOR DECISION – DD2620

### Hosting, Supporting and Development Costs – Planning London Datahub 2023

#### Executive summary:

This request is to seek authorisation for a total spend of £69,000 to fund the support and development costs for the Planning London Datahub.

The Planning London Datahub has been in operation since November 2020, and has enabled automation of planning data from applicants through to completions data, supported by all boroughs' back-office systems providing an automated feed of data. Through work with the boroughs, further improvements are proposed for 2023 that will enable more effective use of the data, and make it a more powerful tool for London.

During 2023 we will review whether this data can be hosted as part of the relaunched London Datastore, which will enable direct hosting by the GLA.

The contract will be procured under TfL's reseller framework, enabling the continued operation of the Planning London Datahub whilst additional, ad hoc development work will be added to the contract to enable improvements to the service.

The breakdown of the total costs is as follows:

- £22,000 for support and hosting costs
- £45,000 for development work
- £2,000 for up to 3 per cent reseller costs.

#### Decision:

That the Executive Director for Good Growth approves a total expenditure of £69,000 on Planning London Datahub support and maintenance services comprising:

- in-hours support service provision between 08:00 and 18:00
- 370 hours of call-off engineering services
- hosting infrastructure services.

#### AUTHORISING DIRECTOR

I have reviewed the request and am satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.

It has my approval.

**Name:** Philip Graham

**Position:** Executive Director for Good Growth

**Signature:**



**Date:**

20/02/2023

## **PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE**

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

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

- 1.1. The Greater London Authority Act 1999 places responsibility for strategic planning in London on the Mayor; and requires him to produce a strategic spatial strategy for London, and to keep it under review. The Mayor is also able to intervene in the planning process, through the application referral process for strategically important planning applications.
- 1.2. In 2019 the GLA undertook the procurement of the Planning London Datahub to replace the London Development Database to develop an up-to-date, automated data-collection and monitoring system for London Plan Data. This was approved by the Mayor under MD2466.
- 1.3. The GLA Planning team must be able to operate both in its strategic role and as a local planning authority. It therefore requires a range of tools and functionality, and clear, robust business processes to support its functions.
- 1.4. There are many benefits of an open and automated service for the Planning London Datahub:
  - collection of automated data on a daily basis via borough back-office system connectors;
  - provision of data as it's created in the boroughs' back-office systems, rather than only when approval has been granted
  - enabling data to be provided by those submitting planning applications through machine-readable formats, rather than the data being held in PDF documents only
  - providing a clearer, more transparent picture of what is happening on the ground for Londoners, SMEs, the government, and others interested in London's growth.
- 1.5. The objective is that, by the end of 2023, the Datahub will be based in its new permanent home. To this end, we are reviewing whether this should be in the London Datastore, as part of a new suite of London relevant data to be held there, enabling future cost savings and business benefits.
- 1.6. The contract will be procured by TfL procurement under TfL's reseller framework. This will enable the continued operation of the Planning London Datahub whilst this review is being undertaken, along with some additional ad hoc development work that will, in the interim, enable improvements to the service.

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

- 2.1. The outputs and objectives for the Planning London Datahub system, which would be delivered by progressing these support and maintenance services, include:
  - continuation of service for the Planning London Datahub
  - using the additional engineering time to continue improving data automation and collection, to reduce the burden on borough officers
  - encouraging boroughs to keep upgrading their back-office systems, and enable further automation.
- 2.2. This decision relates purely to the hosting, support and development costs arising from the project. Separate authorisation will be sought for any further spend on discrete projects for improvements of access to the hub and data provision in the future.

### **3. Equality comments**

- 3.1. The GLA is subject to the public sector equality duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. The Act requires the identification and evaluation of the likely potential impacts, both positive and negative, of GLA decisions on those with protected characteristics. The Mayor is to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. This may involve, in particular, removing or minimising any disadvantage suffered by those who share a relevant protected characteristic, and taking steps to meet the needs of such people. In certain circumstances, compliance with the Act may involve treating people with a protected characteristic more favourably than those without it.
- 3.2. The project is not likely to have any particular impact or difference in impact on any persons with a protected characteristic. Much of the day-to-day change, as a result of this project, will be internal to the organisation in the form of business processes. It is not expected to create any adverse impact on staff with protected characteristics; but this will be monitored and any matters arising will be managed in line with HR policies. Externally the implementation of this project will help ensure more transparency in the Mayor's decision-making, allowing information to be more accessible and searchable. Provisions for compliance with the PSED were included in the procurement process. Any front-facing data analytical tools will be developed and tested in accordance with GLA accessibility requirements.

### **4. Other considerations**

- 4.1. We will be working with TfL's procurement team to secure the contract for support, maintenance and ad hoc development work through TfL's reseller frameworks. This will be funded through the GLA's pre-application budget.
- 4.2. Consideration has been given as to whether to seek alternative providers for elements of this support and hosting, for the current year. However there would not be capacity in the team to undertake this work alongside focused delivery of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment project; we would not be able to deliver the key objective of improving usability and accessibility to the data. As such, it has been concluded that – for this year – this is the best approach. The call-off contract hours arrangement will minimise costs and help best target use of the resource.
- 4.3. The long-term objective is that this dataset will be hosted and supported by the GLA as part of the Datastore. This new contract will give time for the Datastore's work to progress to the point where this is a reasonable option. At the end of this calendar year, the Datastore will for the first time be capable of hosting platforms.

### **5. Financial comments**

- 5.1. Approval is being sought for expenditure of up to £69,000 to fund the support and development costs for the Planning London Datahub.
- 5.2. This expenditure is to fund a contract running from 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023. Expenditure of £17,500 will be accounted for in the 2022-23 financial year; and £51,500 will be accounted for in the 2023-24 financial year.
- 5.3. This expenditure is to be funded from the GLA's pre-application budget held within Planning and Regeneration. This is built into the budget requirement for 2023-24 subject to approval of the Mayor's budget.

### **6. Legal comments**

- 6.1. The sections above indicate that the decision requested of the Director falls within the Mayor's statutory powers under section 30 of the Greater London Authority 1999 (as amended) (the Act), acting on behalf of the Authority, to do anything he considers will promote 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 affect:
    - the health of persons in Greater London
    - the health inequalities between persons living in Greater London
    - the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom
    - climate change, and the consequences of climate change
  - consult with appropriate bodies.
- 6.2. The Mayor also has a subsidiary power, pursuant to section 34 of the Act, to do anything that is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the exercise of any of the statutory functions. In this case this piece of work is incidental to the section 30 powers defined above, as well as sections 334 and 339 of the Act.
- 6.3. Section 334 of the Act requires the Mayor to prepare and publish a spatial development strategy (known as the London Plan). Section 339 of the Act requires the Mayor to keep the London Plan under review, especially matters that may be expected to affect the development of Greater London. or the planning of its development. The Planning Datahub is a means to monitor development; as such it may reasonably be regarded as facilitating, or being conducive or incidental to, the exercise of the Mayor's power detailed above.
- 6.4. In taking the decisions requested, the Director must have due regard to the PSED – namely the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010; and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (race; disability; sex; age; sexual orientation; gender reassignment; religion or belief; pregnancy or maternity) and persons who do not (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). To this end, the Director should have particular regard to section 3 (above) of this report.
- 6.5. If the Director makes the decisions sought, officers must ensure that the services required are procured in liaison with TfL Procurement, and in accordance with the provisions of TfL's reseller framework; and a call-off contract is put in place between and executed by the GLA and the contractor before commencement of such services.

## 7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Procurement of contract	January 2023
Appointment of supplier	January 2023
Contract start date	1 January 2023
Contract end date	31 December 2023

### 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:

Disclosure of the proposed expenditure, prior to concluding the procurement exercise, would prejudice genuine competition and the legitimate interests of the GLA in obtaining value for money. Disclosure is therefore not in the public interest.

Until what date: 13 February 2023

### Part 2 – Sensitive information

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under the 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:

Click and insert name has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

#### Assistant Director/Head of Service:

Click and insert name has reviewed the documentation and is satisfied for it to be referred to the Sponsoring Director for approval.

✓

#### Financial and Legal advice:

The Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal, and this decision reflects their comments.

✓

#### Corporate Investment Board

A summary of this decision was reviewed by the Corporate Investment Board on 13 February 2023.

✓

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES:

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

**Signature:**



**Date:**

15/02/2023