

## REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2630

### Refill London: Powering the Refill Revolution in London

#### Executive summary:

Approval is sought for expenditure of £30,000 to fund City to Sea to promote the Refill London campaign. The Refill London campaign is designed to normalise refill-and-reuse behaviour, and support the infrastructure needed to scale reuse. Promoting the campaign will, in turn, help create awareness of the single-use plastic bottle waste problem; highlight refill as the solution; and increase accessibility of reuse options, such as where Londoners can refill their reusable water bottles for free.

This campaign aims to increase awareness of Refill London resources and free water-refill locations; and inspire Londoners to act by carrying reusables. The project will increase awareness of the Refill London campaign and the solutions to the problem of single-use plastic bottle waste (free water refills); and direct people to locations across the city where people can eat, drink and shop with less plastic through improved use of the Refill app in London.

The campaign will also increase and measure consumer action and be a visible activity of the Mayor of London for waste and the climate emergency.

The project will be completed by 31 March 2023, increasing visibility of all London businesses offering free water refills in the lead-up to World Refill Day on 16 June 2023. This work will support preparations for a bespoke London-specific Campaign in summer 2023 (covered by a separate project in 2023-24).

#### Decision:

That the Assistant Director of Environment and Energy, Good Growth, approves: expenditure of up to £30,000 by the Waste and Green Economy team to grant-fund City to Sea to promote the Refill London campaign.

#### 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:** Catherine Barber

**Position:** Assistant Director of Environment and Energy

**Signature:**



**Date:**

27/02/2023

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

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

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

- 1.1. Plastic packaging blights our streets and finds its way into oceans, harming wildlife and taking centuries to break down whilst releasing toxic chemicals. Single-use plastic bottles form the most prevalent form of plastic packaging in our oceans, and accelerated action is needed to phase out non-recyclable plastic packaging.
- 1.2. Use of single-use packaging materials, including coffee cups and plastic bottles, is growing and putting increasing pressure on local waste management services. WRAP's Plastic Market Situation Report 2021 estimated the UK produces around 2.3m tonnes of plastic packaging with only around half (or 1.2m tonnes) recycled in 2020. In the UK, around 825,000 tonnes of plastic bottles are produced a year. This leads to around 125,000 tonnes produced in London. Each year, Londoners buy around 1.2bn single-use plastic bottles, and only one-third of plastics are recycled in the home.
- 1.3. The Mayor is committed to cutting unnecessary single-use plastics in the capital and in his London Environment Strategy (LES) has set an ambition for London to be a zero-waste city. His aims are that, by 2026, no biodegradable or recyclable waste will be sent to landfill; and, by 2030, 65 per cent of London's municipal waste will be recycled.
- 1.4. The Mayor has launched a programme of work to focus on reducing the impact of single-use plastic bottles. This includes supporting City to Sea's Refill London campaign, which launched in 2018.
- 1.5. City to Sea is a not-for-profit organisation focused on delivering innovative, practical projects that have a positive impact on the environment. Refill London is a consumer and corporate behaviour-change campaign to help people live with less waste and litter. The Refill London campaign helps people eat, drink and shop with less plastic. Businesses signed up to the initiative include high-street chains such as Pret, Costa, Starbucks, Wetherspoons and Premier Inn, alongside thousands of independent businesses such as cafes and zero-waste shops. London shops and businesses signed up to the initiative are mapped on the free Refill app.
- 1.6. The Refill London campaign has been active in London since 2018, and the GLA has successfully been working with the City to Sea to support its expansion for the last few years. There are now more than 4,500 water-refill stations in London (which are mapped on the Refill app), up from approximately 200 when the programme started in March 2018.
- 1.7. Following significant growth seen in 2018-19, progress in London was impacted during the 2020-21 lockdowns, and public attitude towards refill and reusables declined.
- 1.8. In 2021, 17,705 people in London used the Refill app to locate refill stations, compared with 29,997 in 2020, and 112,107 in 2019. Consumer confidence in London (and across the UK) has been impacted by the pandemic; there is a real need to build back pre-pandemic levels of refill-and-reuse engagement, and confidence in using reusables.
- 1.9. In 2022, the Mayor supported a multi-channel marketing and communications campaign designed to drive behavioural change and restore Londoners' confidence in filling and using reusable water bottles and cups. This campaign had an estimated reach of more than 8m, including an estimated 6m via social media and 2.2m via out-of-home advertising across London. The campaign resulted in 15,431 new users in London and 8,813 new Refill app downloads. Last year, Refill London also reached 57,000 unique users (32 per cent of total users in 2022).

- 1.10. This decision sets out the campaign's objectives and outcomes, and how it will increase awareness of Refill London, reduce single-use plastic bottle waste in London, and increase the number of people refilling and reusing; downloading and using the Refill app; and using London's free drinking fountains and refill stations.
- 1.11. The campaign will also support other programmes the Mayor has launched to reduce the impact of single-use plastic bottles. This includes the Mayor's partnerships with the Zoological Society of London (for its #OneLess campaign) and Thames Water to install a network of drinking fountains across London. So far, these partnerships have installed 137 drinking fountains across the capital.
- 1.12. The campaign will complement and support World Refill Day, a global public-awareness campaign that aims to accelerate the transition from single-use plastic to reuse systems. It will also support Transport for London's (TfL's) annual Summer Hydration campaign, which encourages Londoners to carry reusable water bottles and stay hydrated during hot weather.

## 2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1. The project aims to increase awareness of the Refill London campaign and the solutions to the problem of single-use plastic bottle waste (free water refills); inspire Londoners to act by carrying reusables; and drive uptake of the Refill app in London, which highlights locations across the city where you can refill your reusable water bottle for free. The campaign will help reduce single-use plastic bottle waste in London by increasing the number of people refilling and reusing and using London's drinking fountains and refill stations.
- 2.2. The objectives of the campaign are to:
  - increase awareness of Refill London and drive behaviour change in London, by highlighting locations where Londoners can eat, drink and shop with less plastic
  - increase the number of people refilling and reusing on the go – using London's drinking fountains and refill stations
  - re-engage London based Refill schemes to drive community led engagement
  - drive downloads and engagement with the Refill app in London
  - increase accessibility of refill-and-reuse options by promoting new and existing refill stations and categories (e.g. water fountains, water refill points, coffee cups, plastic-free shopping etc)
  - increase and measure consumer action for Refill London.
- 2.3. This ADD is requesting £30,000 to support this project by providing grant funding to City to Sea to deliver the project. The grant will be awarded in accordance with the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code. The cost breakdown for 2022-23 is as follows:

<b>Refill London Campaign</b>	<b>£</b>
Staff costs, research and insight, design and messaging development	7,700
Refill London sticker redesign, print and distribution (one-off)	11,000
Refill Strategic Plan Development	3,200
Public Sector Refill Access Membership	4,550
Marketing and communications	3,550
<b>Total</b>	<b>30,000</b>

- 2.4. The campaign aims to reduce single-use plastic waste in London; and increase the number of people refilling and reusing, and using London's drinking fountains and refill stations. The expected outcomes are as follows:

- increased awareness of Refill London campaign, via:
  - providing new Refill London stickers, highlighting support by the Mayor of London, that will be placed in the window-front of all shops and businesses offering free water refills
  - promoting Refill London on social media channels
- increase usage and engagement with the Refill app, by increasing the number of downloads and active Refill app users in London
- a clear strategic plan for the Refill campaign in London, including clear objectives and KPIs, and outlining opportunities for growth, to support the bespoke campaign later in 2023.
- Access to the Refill scheme public sector hub, which includes:
  - quarterly reporting & data insights to measure the growth of Refill and Reuse in London & the impact it's having
  - marketing & Communications support
  - ability to measure organisational impact and track and report on plastic and carbon saved across London boroughs
  - support to introduce localised reuse schemes in London with guidance, introductions to relevant infrastructure providers and behaviour change experts
- This ADD is requesting £30,000 to support this project by providing grant funding to City to Sea to deliver the project. The grant will be awarded in accordance with the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code. The cost breakdown for 2022-23 is as follows:

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<b>Total</b>	<b>30,000</b>

### 3. Equality comments

- 3.1. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, in considering whether to grant this approval, "due regard" must be had to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not. Protected characteristics include age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation (and marriage or civil partnership status for the purpose of the duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination only).
- 3.2. This duty has been taken into account. The Mayor wishes to support the development of community food hubs in order for them to contribute to the waste and circular economy objectives of his LES (and London recovery missions), which has been the subject of public consultation. No other equalities issues have been identified regarding the nature of the proposals.

### 4. Other considerations

### Key risks and issues

- 4.1. There are no potential or perceived conflicts of interest with any person involved in the drafting or clearance of this form.
- 4.2. The key risks, and mitigating measures, are detailed in the table below.

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Measures to reduce risk</b>
The campaign does not have the expected impact, and does not increase awareness or visibility of the Refill campaign in London.	<p>City to Sea has a great deal of experience in successfully delivering refill-and-reuse campaigns.</p> <p>Business owners will be instructed to place Refill London stickers in the most visible area of the shop. The Refill sticker visibility, coupled with marketing (social media) and Refill app development, will help to drive engagement and direct Londoners to places where they can eat, drink and shop with less plastic.</p> <p>City to Sea has an active stakeholder network in London – including Water Action Group, ReLondon and TfL – that it can use, as well as other external channels, to ensure maximum reach is achieved.</p>
No change to Refill app engagement and downloads.	<p>City to Sea has proven experience of increasing app engagement and downloads since the Refill London campaign launched in 2018.</p> <p>City to Sea also has consumer research, and insights on perceptions around reuse and refill, from the campaign it conducted in summer 2022. This data will help inform key messaging, digital assets and targeted advertising, ensuring the target audience is reached.</p>

### Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

- 4.3. The Mayor's LES sets an ambition for London to be a zero-waste city. The LES contains strategies aimed at reducing single-use plastic waste; and supports campaigns and initiatives that cut the use of single-use packaging. It identifies actions the Mayor will take to reduce the amount of plastic bottles and single-use cups, including behaviour-change campaigns to drive a water-refill culture.
- 4.4. The Mayor renewed his commitment to continue to reduce the number of single-use plastic bottles, and grow the Refill London scheme, when he was re-elected in May 2021.
- 4.5. This campaign also supports the objectives of the Mayor's Green New Deal, by engaging Londoners and businesses in the journey to become a zero-pollution and greener city. Furthermore, it supports the mission's cross-cutting principles to prioritise sustainability; and to improve the resilience of the city, and the health and wellbeing of all Londoners.

## **5. Equality comments**

- 5.1. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, in considering whether to grant this approval, "due regard" must be had to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not. Protected characteristics include age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation (and marriage or civil partnership status for the purpose of the duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination only).
- 5.2. This duty has been taken into account. The Mayor wishes to support the development of community food hubs in order for them to contribute to the waste and circular economy objectives

of his LES (and London recovery missions), which has been the subject of public consultation. No other equalities issues have been identified regarding the nature of the proposals.

## **6. Planned delivery approach and next steps**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Phase One: Research, insight and development, Strategic Plan Development, Refill Access Membership	February-March 2023
Phase Two: Refill London stickers, and marketing and comms	March 2023

## **7. Financial comments**

- 7.1. Approval is being sought for expenditure of up to £30,000 by the Waste and Green Economy team to grant-fund City to Sea to promote the Refill London campaign.
- 7.2. Funds will be issued as a grant. To allow City to Sea to start this work, £15,000 will be dispensed upfront with the remainder dispensed based upon agreed milestones.
- 7.3. An appropriate grant agreement will be drawn up that sets out milestones as a condition for each tranche of payment. In addition to this, clawback clauses will also feature in the agreement which will allow the GLA to recover funds where necessary.
- 7.4. A breakdown of the expenditure can be seen in section 4.1, above.
- 7.5. This project will be entirely funded by the Waste and Circular Economy budget.
- 7.6. All expenditure will be incurred by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

## **8. Legal comments**

- 8.1. As this grant concerns the award of relatively low-value grant funding, and does not appear to depart from the provisions of the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code, no legal comments are required.

**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? NO**

**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:**

Nina Di Certo has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

**Corporate Investment Board**

This decision was agreed by the Corporate Investment Board on the 27 February 2023.

✓

**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL SERVICES:**

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

**Signature:**

*Anna Eastcott*

**Date:**

27/02/2023