

# GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

## REQUEST FOR DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2636

**Title: GLA to enter into a one-year contract for services with Centre for London for 2023-24**

### Executive summary:

This decision seeks approval to enter into a contract for services for one year (2023-24), with the think tank, Centre for London (CfL). This arrangement will replace GLA funding to CfL on a project-by-project basis, and offers better value for money.

### Decision:

That the Executive Director, Strategy and Communications, approves:

1. the GLA entering into a contract for services with Centre for London (CfL) for one year (2023-24) and provide funding of £36,800 plus VAT;
2. an exemption in line with section 10 of the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code to tender this work, on the grounds that this is a continuation of existing work that cannot be separated from the new work.

### AUTHORISING ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/HEAD OF UNIT

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:** Niran Mothada

**Position:** Executive Director, Strategy & Communications

**Signature:**



**Date:**

13 March 2023

## PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

### Decision required – supporting report

#### 1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 Centre for London (CfL) is the capital's foremost think-tank – and the only one dedicated to considering and analysing London-specific challenges and issues, and delivering policy-focused solutions. It has run major strategic projects on London Futures and levelling up, and explored policy solutions for London, including those related to:
- town centre development
  - homelessness and temporary accommodation
  - transport
  - investment.
- 1.2 These projects address the key challenges facing London that align with Mayoral priorities. At a time when the capital is facing one of the most challenging times in its history, and the policy landscape is becoming ever more complex and uncertain, we require well-thought-out, agile, creative, and bespoke responses. CfL's contribution to critical and long-term thinking on, and solutions for, the capital is vital.
- 1.3 Over the past five years, the GLA has provided CfL with funding of £265,000 (a mean value of approximately £53,000 per year), from a range of teams across the GLA, for various distinct pieces of work. These are largely research-based, and in support of the CfL's annual conference. CfL has been in discussions with key stakeholders about new sponsoring arrangements designed to provide more value-adding benefits. These arrangements are based on three available options, outlined below. CfL has agreed comparable arrangements with TfL Property, and with Primera (which runs Central London Business Improvement Districts).

<b>Option A (20% discount)*</b> £36,800 plus VAT p.a.	<b>Option B (£15% discount)*</b> £26,350 plus VAT p.a.	<b>Option C (10% discount)*</b> £14,400 plus VAT p.a.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Supporting sponsor of the London Conference</li><li>• Premium member of Supporters' Network</li><li>• Supporting sponsor of two CfL research projects or events each year, to be discussed and agreed</li></ul> <p>*Cost without discount would be £46,000 plus VAT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Supporting sponsor of the London Conference</li><li>• Standard member of Supporters' Network</li><li>• Supporting sponsor of one CfL research project or event each year, to be discussed and agreed</li></ul> <p>*Cost without discount would be £31,000 plus VAT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Supporting sponsor of the London Conference</li><li>• Standard member of Supporters' Network</li></ul> <p>*Cost without discount would be £16,000 plus VAT</p>

- 1.4 In reviewing these options against previous GLA expenditure on individual commissions, the GLA has determined that entering into an annual contract for services with CfL in 2023-24, at Option A, is likely to be more cost-effective than the alternatives. With a 20 per cent discount, this is costed at £36,800 plus VAT. The GLA considers CfL to be an optimal provider because of its unique focus on London-specific policy challenges and solutions, as well as its track-record and continued programme of work on the capital.

- 1.5 The GLA will seek approval of an exemption in line with section 10 of the Contracts and Funding Code to tender this work on the grounds that this contract for services is a continuation of existing work that cannot be separated from the new work. Research projects to be taken forward over the next 12 months, which form a continued body of insight and intelligence to inform London government thinking and interventions, include:
- decarbonising London's homes
  - safer parks for women and girls
  - moving with the times: fresh thinking on transport in London in an era of disruption and uncertainty
  - nurturing London and the south east's screen industries
  - cleaning up the clutter: de-cluttering central London streets for a cleaner, safer, and more dynamic capital city.
- 1.6 Among the additional benefits that will accrue to the GLA through this arrangement, it will automatically be a sponsor of CfL's London Conference. This is an influential event in the London policy calendar and attracts many of the GLA's key stakeholders, including government ministers and officials, and business and borough leaders. It provides an important opportunity to engage directly with these stakeholders and influence their thinking as part of the GLA's public policy and advocacy strategy.
- 1.7 The GLA will be a member of the CfL Supporters' Network, which provides invite-only access to a programme of policy roundtables featuring senior London leaders. Future roundtables for members include representations from the Managing Director of Lendlease; the CEO of SGN; and the Chief Executive of London and Quadrant. Other Supporters' Network benefits are listed in appendix 1 attached.
- 1.8 CfL is also hosting a spring conference titled 'London's Next Economy', which discusses making London's economy smarter, fairer, greener, and globally leading in an age of disruption. This landmark, half-day conference will help shape the future of the city's economy. Gathering 200 of the most influential and diverse leaders in a free, invite-only setting, it will delve into the drivers of the next economic boom and explore London's potential as a leading, low-carbon economic powerhouse. Discussions will address pressing challenges, such as inequality, the cost-of-living crisis and business fundamentals, with livestreamed talks. The main output from the conference will be a set of policy recommendations aimed at key organisations in the city.

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

- 2.1 The GLA proposes to enter into a one-year contract for services with CfL, at Option A, from 5 April 2023.
- 2.2 The advantage of this arrangement is that it will provide better value for money and benefits. It will also simplify and reduce administration, and strengthen the GLA's strategic relationship with CfL.
- 2.3 It is proposed that the Strategy team's Senior Manager will manage the agreement with CfL. They will liaise with GLA policy teams, as part of regular business-planning processes, to identify projects they may wish to commission or to sponsor, and confirm these with CfL. Funding contributions from respective teams will be brought together within a central budget line held in the City Intelligence Unit (CIU).
- 2.4 If approval is secured with this Decision form, the GLA will sign the one year contract for services for 2023-24 with CfL.

### **3. Equality comments**

- 3.1. There are no negative equality impacts arising directly from this proposal. Having central oversight of all projects agreed with CfL in 2023-24, through the Strategy team, will enable a consistent approach to ensuring that consideration of the GLA's cross-cutting principles, including equality, diversity, and inclusion, is built into any projects that GLA teams agree to sponsor; and that, for policies, strategies and programmes that are the focus of CfL projects, their distributional effects are considered an integral part of projects.

### **4. Other considerations**

#### *Key risks and issues*

- 4.1. A key risk of this proposal is a perceived conflict of interest, because CfL's Chief Executive is a former Mayoral Director of Policy (in the previous mayoral term); and its Chair is a former GLA Executive Director (who left the GLA almost five years ago).
- 4.2. The GLA is confident this does not present a conflict of interest. Neither party has had any direct involvement in drawing up the terms of the grant agreement. This agreement has been managed by CfL's Director of Strategic Projects and the GLA Strategy team's Senior Manager. This proposal is part of a long-term working relationship between the GLA and CfL, and relates to matters that are of clear strategic importance to London.

#### *Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities*

- 4.3. It is considered that entering into this contract for services will help further economic development, wealth creation, social development, and environmental improvement. The independent convening power of CfL will also help to open up City Hall policymaking to a wider range of stakeholders to provide robust, objective evidence and insight. This will help the GLA formulate and co-design policy interventions and strategies, with and for Londoners, that deliver greater benefits.
- 4.4. In developing this proposal, there has been consultation with the Executive Director of Strategy and Communications; the Assistant Director, City Intelligence; various policy teams who have previously supported CfL's work; the Governance team; the secretariat; the legal team; and the finance team. The Monitoring Officer has been consulted on the potential perceived conflict-of-interest issues.

### **5. Financial comments**

- 5.1 This decision seeks approval to enter a contract for one year with CfL. This will give the GLA access to a range of key stakeholders who influence and shape London-focused policy through attendance at the London Conference, private roundtables, and partnership on two research projects or events per annum. Given previous commissions with CfL, this is a more cost-efficient way of receiving the same services.
- 5.2 The cost of this service is £36,800 per annum and can be met from the CIU budget in 2023-24. HMRC will refund the GLA any VAT charged by CfL; this will have no impact on the budget.

### **6. Legal comments**

- 6.1 The foregoing sections of this report indicate that the decisions requested of the assistant director concern the exercise of the Authority's general powers; falling within the Authority's statutory powers to do such things considered to further or which are facilitative of, conducive or incidental to the promotion of social development in Greater London; and in formulating the proposals in respect of which a decision is sought officers have complied with the Authority's related statutory duties to:

- pay due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people
- consider how the proposals will promote the improvement of health of persons, health inequalities between persons and to contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom
- consult with appropriate bodies.

6.2 In taking the decisions requested, the Executive Director 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; advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (race, disability, sex, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment) and persons who do not share it 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 Executive Director should have particular regard to section 3 (above) of this report.

6.3 The procurement of the research services from CfL is valued at £36,800 plus VAT. Section 9 of the Authority's Contracts and Funding Code (the "Code") requires that the Authority undertake a formal tender process or make a call off from an accessible framework for procurements with a value between £10,000 and £150,000. However, section 10 of the Code also provides that an exemption from this requirement may be justified on the basis of previous involvement in a specific current project or continuation of existing work that cannot be separated from the new project/work. The officers have set out at section 1, above, the reasons the procurement of the services from CfL falls within that exemption. Accordingly, the Executive Director may approve the exemption, if they be so minded.

## 7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
CIU consults with policy teams as part of business-planning processes, including on sponsorship of CfL projects for 2023-24	December 2022 – March 2023
Policy team(s) agree project sponsorship	February – March 2023
Approval of Director's Decision	March 2023
GLA and CfL sign 2023-24 grant agreement	March 2023
Project budget(s) vired to the CIU budget line for payment	From 5 April 2023

## Appendices and supporting papers:

Appendix 1 Centre for London Supporters' Network Spring 22.

### 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: Until such time as the grant agreement for 2023-24 with CfL has been signed.

Until what date: 31 March 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:

Michelle Reeves has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

#### Corporate Investment Board

A summary of this decision was reviewed by the Corporate Investment Board on 13 March 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:

13 March 2023