

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR MAYORAL DECISION – MD3119

Title: Community Engagement and Civil Society 2023-25 Programme

Executive summary:

This decision seeks the Mayor's approval of expenditure against the GLA's Community Engagement and Civil Society Programme Budget for 2023-25, which aims to:

- improve the support for effective community engagement across the GLA, specifically in relation to the development and delivery of key programmes
- improve the support for the civil society sector, to help deliver a safer, fairer city for all Londoners.

This work builds on the Engaging Londoners in Recovery programme that was approved by the Mayor under cover of MD2848; and under cover of MD2854, MD2905 and MD2966 as part of the Building Strong Communities mission work.

Decision:

That the Mayor approves:

- total expenditure of up to £812,000 to support the delivery of the Engaging Londoners programme between 2023-24 financial year (expenditure £406,000) and 2024-25 financial year (expenditure £406,000), covering the GLA's Improving Engagement Practice and Connecting Communities into Policymaking workstreams
- total expenditure of up to £230,000 to support the delivery of the Civil Society programme between 2023-24 financial year, covering delivery of the second round of the Civil Society Roots Fund; and the continued development and implementation of the Civic Strength Index
- receipt of £100,000 from City Bridge Trust in 2023-24 and expenditure of the same in 2024-25:
 - the award of up to £80,000 in grant funding for Civil Society Roots Round 2 (added to £750,000 grant funding approved under cover of MD2905 and MD2854)
 - £20,000 to support the extension of the existing fixed-term Civil Society Policy and Project Officer post so that this post may continue to provide grant management and support for the grantees.

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:

25/5/23

PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE TO THE MAYOR

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 The GLA's community engagement work is based on the principle that those who are most affected by an issue are likely to have the most valuable insights into how to respond to it. The communities and individuals most affected by key issues should therefore be involved in decision-making on how to tackle and address those issues. This is because policy that is developed collaboratively with communities is more effective and delivers better outcomes.
- 1.2 The GLA Community Engagement team's mission is to bridge the gap between London's diverse communities and City Hall. This mission is achieved by working with teams across the GLA to improve community engagement practice, delivering programme and policy interventions that are co-designed with London's communities in order to achieve greater impact. The programme also builds the capacity and strength of different sectors (and their systems for engaging communities in decision-making), civil society organisations and community groups in order to enable them to work together effectively to deliver a safer, greener and fairer city for all Londoners.
- 1.3 As the GLA is a city-wide, strategic authority, effective community engagement relies on the strength and capacity of partner organisations. This programme of work therefore also seeks to create resources and support that improve community engagement capacity of key partners. In turn, this work will strengthen the community insight and engagement in GLA programmes.
- 1.4 This work aims to ensure that the work of the GLA, as a whole, has a bigger, more positive impact on Londoners' quality of life, especially those who are most marginalised and underrepresented. For this to be achieved, Londoners need to feel seen, heard and respected by the GLA; and GLA teams need to better involve Londoners in the development and delivery of their policy and programmes, reflecting their needs, lives and concerns, especially those most impacted by those policies and programmes.
- 1.5 For London's communities, the key outcomes are:
 - London's communities benefit from better GLA programmes, thanks to improved mechanisms that enable Londoners and stakeholders to participate more effectively in the GLA's programme development and decision-making processes
 - London's communities are better resourced (in terms of financial resource, capacity and networks) to support Londoners to have a voice in decision-making at the GLA
 - stronger relationships and higher trust between London's communities and the GLA
 - greater confidence in, and awareness and use of, civic and community-led data and insight by the GLA and other London-based policy and decision-makers.
- 1.6 For GLA staff, the key outcomes are:
 - improved mechanisms in place for the GLA's teams to incorporate co-production within the decision-making process
 - GLA staff have improved knowledge, skills, motivation and expertise to continue involving communities appropriately in their work

- an increased focus on engaging Londoners using a more intersectional approach – one that is more inclusive and considerate of the many types of inequalities people experience in the city
- community views are fully embedded across the decision-making process
- there is better understanding about the needs and capacity of London's civic system.

- 1.7 This MD is requesting approval for spend on programmes seeking to achieve the outcomes listed above. These programmes focus on supporting the improvement of: engagement practice in London, through the development of resources that support engagement with London's communities, including via cross-sector partners; and civil society's capacity and resource to help communities feel seen and heard in decision-making. Community Engagement resources will be used to improve practice across the GLA with support focused on a limited number of key delivery priorities. Details of the Engaging Londoners 2023-25 programme and the Civil Society 2023-25 programme are outlined further in section two of this MD.
- 1.8 The outcomes and impact of this work will be measured and evaluated through the Community Engagement's team evaluation framework. This was co-designed and developed with policy teams, community organisations and other partners.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

Engaging Londoners 2023-25 programme

- 2.1 The Engaging Londoners 2023-25 programme will build on the work delivered across 2021-23, and outlined in MD2848. This work sought to ensure that communities that have historically faced barriers to participation, and those who are disproportionately affected by structural inequalities, have the opportunity to share their lived experience with London's decision-makers to inform and shape policies and programmes that impact them.
- 2.2 The programme aims to improve the systems and processes for engagement and sharing community-led insight with GLA decision-makers, to help shape policy and programmes for Londoners who experience structural inequalities. This will be achieved through the ongoing development and delivery of a core set of resources to support effective engagement to be used by policy teams at the GLA, as well as cross-sector partners (including boroughs, academic organisations, and community organisations.) These teams and partners will be supported to effectively and meaningfully engage with London's diverse communities to inform and shape policies and programmes for London.
- 2.3 The purpose of the Engaging Londoners programme is to achieve four overarching objectives:
- to build the capacity, skills and confidence of GLA officers and key partners to engage with London's diverse communities
 - to identify opportunities to amplify the voices of London communities with the fewest opportunities, due to structural exclusion, so they can participate in London's response to policy priorities
 - to foster a more equitable relationship between London's diverse communities and decision-makers
 - to embed community insight with the GLA and partner organisations, informing their understanding of the aspirations and needs of London's communities.

2.4 These objectives will be achieved through the delivery of two broad work streams: Improving Engagement Practice and Connecting Communities into Policymaking. These are detailed below.

- Improving Engagement Practice expenditure of £410,000 across two years will deliver the following outputs and deliverables:
 - The design, development and delivery of a pan-London community of practice focused on improving engagement practice in London. Work will continue to deliver the London Engagement Collaborative, which has so far engaged over 150 organisations who are working with communities to design and deliver policies and programmes to improve the lives of Londoners. This includes delivering a series of learning events, knowledge exchanges and training opportunities for participants; and providing grant funding to improve capacity for collaborations focused on engagement across sectors.
 - The creation of tools, support and guidance for GLA policy officers to strengthen their engagement practice. This includes a community engagement theory of change and evaluation framework to help GLA policy teams better understand the impact of their engagement.
 - Delivery of up to three large events to share learning and best practice focused on the future of engagement practice, participation and engagement in policymaking in London. This will spotlight best practice; foster opportunities for collaboration; and enable shared learning across sectors.
 - Research to identify trends, gaps and insights into engagement practice, which will support the ongoing development of the Engaging Londoners programme and our support to Londoners who face barriers to participation.
 - Communications, marketing and evaluation activity for the programme.
 - Support or community payments for community organisations facing barriers to participation and engagement.

	2023-24	2024-25
Revenue	£205k	£205k

- Connecting Communities into Policymaking expenditure of up to £402,000 across two years will deliver the following outputs and deliverables:
 - The design, development and launch of the GLA's Community Insights Hub, which will provide a range of community insights for use by GLA teams. Work will build on the prototype phase which took place across 2021-23. This includes commissioning research to identify existing online collections of community-led insight, which can be platformed on the hub; and training for users to build capacity and skills to use community-led insight, evaluation and monitoring work.
 - Support to implement the recommendations from the evidence review carried out in 2022-23 of the use of peer-led research in the GLA and across London.
 - The commission of the fourth and fifth rounds of the Civic Futures leadership programme (previously approved under MD2848), including the provision of grants to enable collaboration to test solutions that better support Londoners.
 - The development of the Civic Futures Alumni Network to support the existing 90 fellows, and any future fellows, from the fourth and fifth rounds of the programme. This will facilitate greater collaboration between civil society and local government leaders,

supported through the provision of grants for participants to access help; and it will improve the system, mechanisms, processes and capacity to engage communities in decision-making.

- The award of funding as a contribution to costs of up to 10 engagement commissions to support with engagement relating to delivery of the Building a Fairer City programme and other Mayoral priorities.

	2023-24	2024-25
Revenue	£201k	£201k

- 2.5 The grant funding mentioned above will be distributed to groups both via our delivery partners and the GLA's processes, depending on the most appropriate and accessible route for the intended recipients.

Civil Society 2023-25 programme

- 2.6 The Civil Society 2023-25 programme aims to provide support that helps support a strong civil society that delivers a safer, fairer city for all Londoners.
- 2.7 The Civil Society 2023-25 programme aims to achieve the following objectives:
- to improve the community and place-based support for equity-led civil society organisations
 - to improve understanding of the factors contributing to a strengthened civil society in London; measure the distribution of these factors across the capital; and better enable city-wide resources to be directed appropriately.
- 2.8 These objectives will be achieved through two key projects: the Civil Society Roots programme and the Civic Strength Index.
- 2.9 The Civil Society Roots programme 2023-25 will focus on increasing civil society strength through supporting the development of equity-led civil society infrastructure organisations. The programme will see an expenditure of £245,000 (including £100,000 from City Bridge Trust) to deliver:
- grant funding support to equity-led organisations, which will enable organisations to strengthen relationship-building, networks and community voices within identified geographies; this is for the ultimate purpose of increasing the support available for Londoners impacted by structural inequalities
 - a support programme for all grantees, which includes learning and skills development workshops; networking events; and borough-specific collaboration sessions
 - a more intense support programme for development grantees from Round 1 who will be supported through the application and if successful, delivery of their programmes in Round 2.
- 2.10 We are seeking approval from City Bridge Trust to allocate £20,000 of their proposed £100,000 funding for the extension of the existing fixed-term post of Civil Society Roots Officer in 2024-25. As part of the Trust's current funding, MD2905 outlines £120,000 which will be spent on staffing until May 2024. This additional £20,000 will allow us to resource the programme all the way to September 2025, subject to obtaining the required GLA approvals for the extension of the post.
- 2.11 The distribution and management of grant funding for the programme will be undertaken via GLA directly.

2.12 The delivery of the Civic Strength Index across 2023-24 will seek to support policymakers (local authorities/funders) to understand how to use the framework provided by the index to better identify the focus and need for intervention and investment in their communities. This will include work to improve data robustness and the qualitative framework of the index, helping local practitioners to understand the data and information that they can use to inform their analysis and decision making. The programme will see an expenditure of £85,000 to deliver:

- an improved evidence base underpinning a robust framework that is accessible for all stakeholders
- further improvements to the data gaps relating to the index
- engagement sessions with partners and other regional bodies delivering Indices – for example, the Thriving Place Index, the Wellbeing Index and the Urban Health Index – to develop a collaborative approach and adoption.

2.13 As part of this work, we will work with colleagues across the GLA to ensure the best fit between the Civic Strength Index and the GLA's new wellbeing index, including further exploration of whether the aims of both indices are best delivered through a combined approach.

Revenue	2023-24	2024-25
Civil Society Roots 3, second-round grants and support programme	£145,000	£100,000
Civic Strength Index development and operationalising	£85,000	
Income	2023-24	
Funding contribution for Civil Society Roots 3 from City Bridge Trust	£100,000	

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 Public Sector Equality Duty, that is the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster relations between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not.

3.2 The Community Engagement team's work programme has a particular emphasis on those who would not usually be reached through mass engagement, because they face barriers such as limited access support, racism, digital exclusion, language, insecure immigration status and mistrust of public institutions. It aims to gain deeper insight into the lived experiences of communities across London that are often hidden or excluded from policymaking in the capital. It will do so through engagement with smaller community and faith organisations.

3.3 The Community Engagement team will continue to work closely with the GLA Equalities team and the City Intelligence Unit. This work will ensure the activities agreed take account of the most up-to-date evidence regarding how protected characteristic groups are impacted by the cost-of-living crisis, the pandemic and other structural inequalities. Due consideration will be taken in relation to the portfolio of communities involved in the programme to ensure it is inclusive and addresses intersections between characteristics where there may be adverse impacts on individuals or groups.

3.4 The Community Engagement team's work programme will be reflective of the communities it is aiming to reach and engage, i.e. communities who have been most impacted by the cost-of-living crisis, the

pandemic and continued structural inequalities. The team will aim to embed community expertise into the design, delivery and evaluation of the programme. This will take the form of, for example, partnering with community-led organisations to deliver training and capacity for participants of the programme; ensuring funding/other decision panels include community representation; and embedding community expertise within steering groups for key projects within the wider work programme.

- 3.5 The Community Engagement team's funding programmes focus directly on strengthening equity-led organisations, recognising that these groups receive proportionally less funding across the capital from trusts and foundations. The programmes will be designed specifically to remove barriers to access, through providing access grants and information workshops to support applicants.

4. Other considerations

Risk register

Risk	Mitigation measures	Current probability (1-4)	Current impact (1-4)	RAG
Commissioned partners fail to deliver support for community groups, resulting in mistrust of the GLA and other strategic agencies.	Clear specifications outlined in contracts for services/supplies and milestones, and/or outputs and outcomes in funding agreements – including regular monitoring meetings and feedback from community groups to spot risks early.	2	3	G
The impact of the cost-of-living crisis, and the strain on civil society, might result in a significantly increased demand for funding that we are not able to meet.	Ensuring regular and close contact with communities and key stakeholders will ensure we remain sensitive to, and cognisant of, the needs of communities. Building an expression-of-interest process into the grant design will ensure we only take forward applicants who fit our criteria and have a high chance of being funded.	2	4	A
Potential duplication of efforts to provide support and capacity for communities and cross-sector partners by other organisations in London, which leads to minimal engagement and take-up of offers led by the GLA.	Ensure regular mapping and research take place throughout delivery to ensure that: we are meeting the needs of communities and cross-sector partners; and the development of programmes is based on ideas and collaboration with communities, civil society and other cross-sector partners.	2	3	G

Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

- 4.1 The Community Engagement and Civil Society 2023-25 programme supports the GLA Community Engagement team's ongoing mission to bridge the gap between London's diverse communities and City Hall.
- 4.2 The programme of work outlined in this MD contributes to the following objectives, outlined in the Mayor's equality, diversity and inclusion strategy and objectives:

- Objective 13: “That Londoners from all walks of life feel heard and see themselves reflected in the public realm.”
 - Engaging Londoners: Communities and individuals will be encouraged to influence, shape and take part in the city’s recovery from the pandemic through the London Engagement Collaborative.
- Objective 14: “To ensure London’s diverse communities have the knowledge, networks, and volunteering opportunities they need to thrive.”
 - Grant making: The Mayor will continue to support the grassroots and frontline charities that form the backbone of London’s civil society – and the infrastructure organisations that support them – through the Civil Society Roots programme. The Civil Society Roots fund focuses on 10 ‘cold spots’ where funders struggle to reach community groups. The £1m of funding will support communities of people with protected characteristics affected by structural and disproportionate inequalities.

4.3 The programme of work also supports actions relating to the priority areas ‘Equity in Public Service’ and ‘Civil Society Strength’, as detailed in the Building a Fairer City Plan led by the London Partnership Board (successor to the London Recovery Board) Structural Inequalities Sub-group launched in May 2021. These actions include the following:

- Action 8: Put London’s communities at the heart of service provision.
- Action 9: Improve communities’ levels of trust and confidence in public service providers.
- Action 10: Prioritise work to address structural racism.
- Action 13: Increase the proportion of funding for equalities-led, equity groups and civil society work that supports Londoners facing discrimination.
- Action 14: Support strong relationships between equalities-led civil society, funders, equalities-led civil society, funders, public bodies and private companies.

Consultations and impact assessments

4.4 The Community Engagement team has led the following additional engagement, which has informed and influenced the design of the activity proposed outlined in this MD:

- feedback from participants of the GLA’s London Engagement Collaborative
- engagement with GLA policy teams and officers to inform support needs via the Engagement Working Group; action-learning sets; and informal one-to-one and team-level conversations with colleagues across the organisation
- presented to the London Policy and Strategy Network, which is convened by the London Borough of Newham’s policy team, on community-led insights and the Civic Strength Index
- insights and reflection from participants of the Community-Led Recovery Programme via an external evaluation report
- user research and analysis conducted to help inform the prototype, look and feel of the Community Insights Hub, and how we amplify the use of community-led insight in policymaking
- presented to local authority partners via the London Councils-led London Community Engagement Network, which brings together policy officers from across London’s 32 boroughs

- engagement with GLA policy teams, local authority stakeholders and community groups through technical and user advisory groups, and user-testing sessions, to inform development of the Civic Strength Index
- feedback and reflection from current and previous Civil Society Roots grantees to inform the design and delivery of the programme.

4.5 There are no conflicts of interest to declare from those involved in the drafting or clearance of this decision.

5. Financial comments

5.1 Approval is being sought for the following:

- expenditure of up to £812,000 to support the delivery of the Engaging Londoners programme across 2023-24 and 2024-25 financial years, covering the GLA's Improving Engagement Practice and Connecting Communities into Policymaking workstreams
- expenditure of up to £230,000 to support: the delivery of the Civil Society programme in 2023-24, covering delivery of the second round of the Civil Society Roots Fund; and the continued development and implementation of the Civic Strength Index
- the breakdown by financial years is shown in the table below:

	2023-24	2024-25	Total
Engaging Londoners Programme	£406,000	£406,000	£812,000
Civil Society Programme	£230,000	£0	£230,000

- receipt of £100,000 from City Bridge Trust in 2023-24 and expenditure of the same in 2024-25:
 - the award of up to £80,000 in grant funding for Civil Society Roots Round 2 (added to £750,000 grant funding approved under cover of MD2905 and MD2854)
 - £20,000 to support the extension of the existing fixed-term Civil Society Policy and Project Officer post so that this post may continue beyond May 2024 to provide grant management and support for the grantees.

5.2 There is sufficient budget within the approved 2023-24 budget to meet the expenditure of £406,000 in the Engaging Londoners programme and £230,000 in the Civil Society programme.

5.3 Funding for future financial years will be subject to the annual budget setting process and is subject to change. The expenditure of £406,000 in the Engaging Londoners programme in the financial year 2024-25 are assumed to be affordable and can only be confirmed when the budget allocation is formally approved as part of the annual budget setting and approval process.

5.4 Any contracts that commit the GLA in future years are subject to appropriate break clauses.

5.5 The award of funding to the delivery partners will be subject to satisfactory financial due diligence.

6. Legal comments

Power to undertake the requested decisions

6.1 The foregoing sections of this report indicate that the decisions requested of the Mayor concern the exercise of the Authority's general powers and fall within the Authority's statutory power to do such things considered to further or which are facilitative of, conducive or incidental to the promotion of social development within 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 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 (age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation) 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 Mayor should have particular regard to section three (above) of this report.

Grant funding

- 6.3 Decision three of this decision form seeks approval for the receipt by the Authority of £100,000 grant funding from the City Bridge Trust. Officers are reminded to ensure that the Authority comply with the conditions, which the City Bridge Trust has attached to the funding.
- 6.4 Officers are reminded to comply with section 12 of the Authority's Contracts and Funding Code and with the Subsidy Control Act 2022, where the Authority is providing as grant funding any part of the budget the subject of this decision form. Furthermore, officers must ensure that an appropriate funding agreement be put in place between the Authority and any recipients before any part of the grant funding be paid.

Procurement

- 6.5 Officers are reminded to comply with section 12 of the Authority's Contracts and Funding Code, where the Authority is using any part of the budget the subject of this MD for the procurement of services or supplies. Furthermore, officers must ensure that an appropriate contract be put in place between the Authority and the relevant service provider/supplier.

Staffing

- 6.6 It should be noted that this decision relates only to the approval of budget although there is reference to approval also being sought for continued expenditure for one existing fixed-term post. Any staffing decisions that need to be made following this decision must be approved by the Head of Paid Service in accordance with the GLA Head of Paid Service Staffing Protocol and Scheme of Delegation.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Milestone
London Engagement Collaborative	
Commission delivery partner(s)	June 2023
Delivery of workshops and engagement activity	September 2023 – September 2024

Launch of micro-fund to support the London Engagement Collaborative	September 2023; July 2024
Community Insights Hub	
Launch of the Community Insights Hub	January 2024
Civic Futures 4 and 5	
Commission delivery partner(s) for Civic Futures 4 and 5	May 2023
Launch of Civic Futures 4 and 5	June 2023; June 2025
Launch of Alumni Network and announcement of micro-grants	May 2023
Supporting Core Engagement	
Access support/grants	May 2023 – May 2025
Research findings on community engagement practices disseminated	August 2023
Implementation of peer-led research evidence review recommendations	May 2023 – May 2024
Programme evaluation	March 2024; March 2025
Civil Society Roots programme	
Civil Society Roots 3 impact event delivered	July 2023
Civil Society Roots 3 Round 2 grants commence	September 2023
Civic Strength Index	
Launch of second iteration	June 2023
Development of third iteration commences	August 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 be published either 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:

Ayesha Hameed has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Sponsoring Director:

Tunde Olayinka 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 9 May 2023.

✓

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES:

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

Signature:



Date:

22/05/2023

CHIEF OF STAFF:

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

Signature:



Date:

24/05/2023