

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2708

Major Sports Events National Hockey League Fan Zone Support

Executive summary:

The GLA has been working closely with the National Hockey League (NHL) to bring the NHL Global Series to London. As part of this work, the NHL has indicated its desire to build brand awareness and fans in London through an activation this summer, with an event at the Canada Day celebrations in Trafalgar Square.

The Major Sports Events (MSE) team is seeking approval for £35,000 of funding from the MSE budget (2023-24) to support this activity.

The NHL has provided a supportive statement affirming that a contribution will support the continuation of our partnership towards delivering Global Series games in London.

Decision:

That the Assistant Director of External Relations approves spend of up to £35,000 from the Major Sports Events annual budget (2023-24) to support the delivery of a National Hockey League Fan Zone in Trafalgar Square.

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: Nicole Valentinuzzi

Position: Assistant Director External Relations

Signature:



Date:

26/02/2024

PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. To maintain its position as the sporting capital of the world, London must continue to secure and deliver a further strong portfolio of major sports events (MSE) in the next 10 years, to build on and maintain our success following the Olympic Games in 2012, in alignment with the MSE Strategic Framework 2023-30.
- 1.2. As set out in the MSE Strategic Framework 2023-30, a key strategic priority for the Mayor is to secure additional global franchise sporting events for London. London already plays host to the National Football League and Major League Baseball. Throughout 2023, the MSE team has been working with event partners at the National Hockey League (NHL) and the National Basketball Association to build partnerships to secure future games in London.
- 1.3. The MSE team and the Mayor's Office see the NHL Global Series as a priority global sporting event to bring to the city.
- 1.4. The NHL Global Series has been developed by the NHL to expand its presence and fan base worldwide by hosting regular-season games outside of North America. The series typically involves teams from the NHL playing exhibition or regular-season games in various international locations, including Europe and Asia. The NHL Global Series aims to promote the sport of hockey globally; increase its popularity in non-traditional hockey markets; provide opportunities for the local community to engage in and play ice hockey; and provide fans around the world with the opportunity to experience live NHL action.
- 1.5. Over the years, the NHL Global Series has visited various cities across Europe, including Stockholm, Helsinki, Prague, Berlin and Zurich. The series has also ventured into Asia, with games being played in countries such as China and Japan. London has yet to host the series.
- 1.6. The MSE team have been working over the past seven months to secure the NHL Global Series in London, as part of the Mayor's ambition to secure global franchise sports. In January 2024 it came to light that the NHL wanted to explore an opportunity to activate in London, in summer 2024. The MSE team introduced the NHL to the Canadian Embassy (which organises Canada Day in London). Since then, positive discussions have taken place around the inclusion of an NHL Fan Zone at this event on Sunday 30 June 2024.
- 1.7. The NHL's ambitions, through this activation, is to build a market in London and create a foundation for future Global Series events.
- 1.8. Financial support from the MSE budget will support the existing partnership with the NHL, directly influencing London's prospects of hosting the NHL Global Series in the future. The NHL has provided a supportive statement affirming that a contribution will support the continuation of our partnership towards delivering Global Games in London.
- 1.9. The MSE team would like to allocate £35,000 from the MSE budget for 2023-24 to support with operational costs and marketing. Costs to deliver the NHL Fan Zone are approximately £50,000. The remaining £15,000 operational costs, and any additional costs (including marketing costs) above the £35,000 GLA funds, will be covered by the NHL.
- 1.10. There is a risk that without confirmed funding before 19 March 2024, the NHL will decide, due to cost, not to activate in London. London does not want to miss out on this opportunity to drive engagement in the sport and build a stronger partnership with the NHL, as this could negatively impact future opportunities to host the NHL Global Series.

- 1.11. London has a longstanding relationship with the Canadian Embassy, situated adjacent to Trafalgar Square. This is an important neighbour with the power to impact licensing decisions for Trafalgar Square. This, in turn, could directly impact the GLA's ability to host events on Trafalgar Square. For this reason, it is integral to maintain a good working relationship with this stakeholder. The Events for London team supports the Canadian Embassy annually to deliver Canada Day on Trafalgar Square.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1. The following objectives are to be met through supporting this activity:
- to strengthen London's partnership with the NHL
 - to demonstrate London's commitment to the franchise, supporting further negotiations for future games in London
 - to enable the NHL to grow its London fanbase in preparation for future games in London
 - to provide Londoners and visitors with the opportunity to engage and participate in ice hockey at a free-to-access event in London
 - to benefit from NHL promotion of London and the event.
- 2.2. There is scope, through this partnership, for the NHL and the Canadian Embassy to work on a business reception event, opening up further opportunities for the NHL here in London.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, as a public authority, the Mayor of London must have 'due regard' of 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.
- 3.2. The MSE team will ensure that as many Londoners as possible, including those with protected characteristics (as defined in the Equality Act 2010), are considered in the planning of the activation.
- 3.3. Having Team London manage and deliver the event volunteer programme would ensure the activation aligns with the existing Team London equality policy. Team London volunteer programmes are open to all that apply, regardless of race, disability, sex, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, or gender reassignment.
- 3.4. Appropriate assistance to all Londoners and visitors will be available at the NHL Fan Zone. The volunteer-recruitment strategy will encourage those with language skills to join the volunteering programme. This ensures that the sites will be able to offer assistance to both Londoners and visitors with whom we may have previously been unable to communicate; and will foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not.
- 3.5. Planning is being shaped by 'London 2030 Tourism Vision' (formerly 'A Tourism Vision for London') to ensure that visitors are provided with information in accessible formats to help them do and see more in London. This information has been improved to help them find rewarding experiences. Visitors and Londoners alike are encouraged to explore areas beyond central London; this means persons who share a relevant protected characteristic will be able to participate in public life, or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- 3.6. The GLA will continue to work with the organisers to ensure that it is an accessible venue.

- 3.7. The NHL Fan Zone activity will be inclusive and aimed at all Londoners. This will be achieved through the programme content; the broad and targeted approach to marketing channels; and access facilities at the event, which specifically aim to reduce barriers to attendance for people with disabilities or mobility issues.

4. Other considerations

- 4.1. Funding will be provided to the NHL following approval via a funding agreement. This will set out, in principle, the objectives and outcomes of the funding. An officer from the MSE team will be responsible for managing this agreement and providing updates to the senior management team.
- 4.2. There are no known conflicts of interests or interests to declare associated with this decision, including from officers drafting or clearing this decision.
- 4.3. Potential risks are detailed in the table below:

Risk	Likelihood/Impact	Response and mitigation
The Mayor's missions and aims are not incorporated into the event.	Low/medium	The MSE team will work closely with the NHL and the Canadian Embassy to ensure the NHL Fan Zone delivers real benefit to Londoners, in line with the Mayor's missions.
Due to an international crisis (e.g. pandemic, war) the event faces potential significant changes/cancellation.	Low/Low	The MSE team will work closely with the NHL and the Canadian Embassy to monitor risks, and report back to the MSE senior management team.
The NHL sponsors do not align with GLA sponsorship policy.	Low/medium	The MSE team will work closely with the NHL and the Canadian Embassy to make them aware of the GLA's sponsorship policy to negate any conflicts here.

Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

- 4.4. GLA support for the event will:

- support the delivery of the Mayor's manifesto commitment to continue to bring global franchise sport to the city.
- support delivery of the GLA's major sports event framework
- increase economic investment into London
- increase international exposure for London as the world's leading city for sport
- increase international exposure for London in key North American markets
- supports London's relationships with the Canadian Embassy a key international stakeholder

- 4.5 The table below shows how the event aligns to the current missions.

Building Strong Communities	The MSE team will engage Team London to support the NHL activation.
High Streets for All	Eventgoers tend to make events a full day out, and spend directly in the local area. With a Mayoral focus on supporting attendance to attractions and

	hospitality in the City, this activation would be another draw for visitors to the city.
A New Deal For Young People	The MSE team will engage the Violence Reduction Unit and community Sports teams to look at how young people can engage with the activities in Trafalgar Square.
Mental Health and Wellbeing	This activity directly supports active lives through promotion of physical activity. The MSE team will look to engage Ice Hockey UK (the national governing body) in pathways to participating in the sport in London, post event.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1. The £35,000 cost of this event will be covered by the MSE budget within the Strategy and Communications Directorate. There is sufficient cover in the MSE budget to fund this spend.

6. Planned delivery approach and next steps

- 6.1. The next steps are summarised below:

Activity	Timeline
Confirm funding with NHL	February 2024
Draft and sign off funding agreement	March 2024
Receive invoice	March 2024
Incorporate GLA community sport team involvement	March-June 2024
Deliver event	Sunday 1 July 2024

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? YES

If YES, for what reason: Commercially sensitive for partner – defer until post event.

Until what date: 1 August 2024

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:

Lottie England has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Advice:

The Finance team has commented on this proposal.

✓

Corporate Investment Board

This decision was agreed by the Corporate Investment Board on 26 February 2024.

✓

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FINANCIAL SERVICES:

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

Signature:

Anna Gustaf

Date:

26/02/2024