

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR MAYORAL DECISION – MD3348

London Get Britain Working Trailblazers 2025-26

Executive Summary:

This Mayoral Decision (MD) form asks the Mayor to approve the GLA's receipt of funding and proposed approach to administer the grant of £30 million allocated by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to implement Get Britain Working Economic Inactivity and Youth Trailblazers in London for the 2025-26 financial year (FY). This includes the redistribution of funding to London's Sub-Regional Partnerships (SRPs), which have designed four separate initiatives to fulfil the government's mission. The GLA will utilise up to £5 million funding to provide strategic management and administration (M&A) of the total trailblazer allocation, as well as providing systems leadership and strengthening pan-London initiatives supporting economically inactive and young people.

Decision:

That the Mayor:

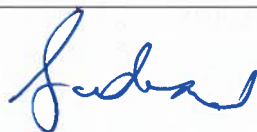
1. approves the GLA's receipt of up to £30 million worth of funding granted by the Department for Work and Pensions to implement London's Get Britain Working Economic Inactivity and Youth Trailblazers trailed in the Get Britain Working White Paper
2. approves the redistribution of £25 million of this funding to London's Sub-Regional Partnerships (Central London Forward, South London Partnership, Local London and West London Alliance), in accordance with the proposals the SRPs have submitted to the GLA and London Councils as to how this will be spent
3. approves the GLA's expenditure of £5 million from this funding to provide pan-London co-ordination and management of all trailblazer activity, and to deliver a pan-London Youth Trailblazer
4. delegates authority to the Assistant Directors – Skills and Employment, to make all further Get Britain Working Economic Inactivity and Youth Trailblazer programme-level decisions and financial commitments in line with local governance arrangements and without the need for a further decision form.

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:

21/4/25

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

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. Funding for Economic Inactivity and Youth Trailblazers (Trailblazers) programmes was confirmed in the government's [Get Britain Working White Paper \(White Paper\)](#), published in November 2024.
- 1.2. These Trailblazers focus on joining up existing local provision in the work, health and skills, and youth space respectively, with an emphasis on innovative approaches. It was also announced that London would have four Trailblazers – two for economic inactivity, worth up to £10m each and two for youth, worth up to £5m each, equalling a funding package of £30m. Full objectives and aims of the Trailblazers can be found in [Appendix A](#).
- 1.3. The government has subsequently confirmed that the total Trailblazer funding allocation for London can be used flexibly across economic inactivity and youth Trailblazers, and this has been fed into high-level proposals. More information on the high-level proposals can be found in paragraphs 2.4 – 2.8.
- 1.4. In London, the GLA is the accountable body for the Trailblazers, working closely with London Councils and London's four Sub-Regional Partnerships (SRPs) to deliver them. This approach reflects the government's intention in the White Paper, which stated that some funding for the Trailblazers would go to the SRPs¹ in London.
- 1.5. GLA officials also submitted proposals to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to bring forward portions of the above allocation as set-up grants to cover scoping activity delivered in the run-up to Trailblazer rollout in Spring 2025.
- 1.6. High-level proposal papers have been submitted for the Youth and Economic Inactivity Trailblazers to DWP. All proposals thus far have been co-designed by a strategic group of London government² officers, including the directors of London's four SRPs, London Councils' Strategic Lead for Enterprise, Economy and Skills, GLA's Assistant Directors – Skills and Employment, and Heads of Skills and Employment from selected London boroughs.
- 1.7. Proposal development has also been informed by consultation with two London trailblazer working groups. These trailblazer working groups have been convened to discuss key challenges and surface new partners that London government will work with to deliver in the capital. The groups will continue to meet regularly, and their memberships include (non-exhaustive):
 - education representatives
 - employment support
 - employers
 - health representatives, including the Office Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID), NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB) and NHS London colleagues
 - wraparound support and other support

¹ London's four Sub-Regional Partnerships are strategic partnerships which support coordination and partnership across their constituent local authorities in London. They are Central London Forward, Local London (covering East London), South London Partnership, and West London Alliance.

² The GLA, London Councils and London's four Sub-Regional Partnerships.

- national government
- London government partners (including GLA teams).

1.8. Final proposals for trailblazer delivery were submitted by the GLA to DWP in February 2025. These proposals contained more indicative detail on delivery and expected outcomes and volumes.

2. Objective and expected outcomes

2.1. The expected outcomes of London's Trailblazers are as below, following co-design by the London strategic group and consultation with stakeholders (as above). To note, the government has prescribed no specific outcomes for the Trailblazers:

- increased numbers of economically inactive Londoners moving towards work, to be measured through 'distance-travelled' metrics
- increased numbers of young Londoners successfully moving into and out of the government's Youth Guarantee, a plan to support 18–21-year-olds nationally to find education, training or a job
- increased engagement levels with employment, education and training, and wraparound support services
- better integration of services, and understanding of wider provision, building on the Mayor's No Wrong Door Programme (NWD)
- increased number of referral routes between services, and increased knowledge within these services of the support available, through training and upskilling
- increased capacity in the sector due to the sharing of services, better information, and more efficient referrals
- the opportunity to test and evaluate ideas, building an evidence base to support our case to scale up interventions and test these approaches with wider cohorts of Londoners. We will also be able to feed this into the development of the government's new Jobs and Careers Services to ensure this caters to the needs of Londoners
- the Trailblazers will help establish London's role in locally directed employment support and health as part of an integrated Inclusive Talent System.

Set-up grants

2.2. Proposals within the set-up grant submissions were agreed across London government and include:

- budget to cover commissioning of research work and data join-up activity
- engagement with service users, convening costs for key external stakeholders
- the recruitment of two GLA Grade 10 Principal Policy Officers and four part-time (0.5 FTE) SRP officers. These have been approved in parallel through Establishment Control processes
- costs of developing communications for the Trailblazers in London
- the total grant requested was £181,600. The outcome of this grant spend is that the Trailblazers will be developed with adequate consultation from key stakeholders, build in the service user

voice into design and have governance and finance functions prepared for the delivery of the contract.

- 2.3. Set-up grant proposals were accepted by DWP without comment, and funding for this was brought forward from the total trailblazer allocation.

High-level proposal activity

- 2.4. Working with London government, the high-level proposals for London include three economic inactivity Trailblazers, delivered by SRPs, and two youth Trailblazers, one delivered by an SRP and one pan-London intervention led by the GLA. The government have confirmed that this approach is permitted despite technically exceeding our 'officially announced' number of Trailblazers.
- 2.5. The sub-regional approach has an approximate cost envelope of £25m (minus money brought forward for set up grant activity). The GLA will use £5m for the additional pan-London strategic interventions (outlined below). The four SRP-led initiatives are as follows, subject to further discussion and co-design:
- West London Alliance (WLA): WLA will deliver an economic inactivity trailblazer and will primarily be looking to build the evidence base on supporting individuals with MSK (musculoskeletal) conditions into work., the second largest reason as to why individuals claim health-related benefits. This intervention will cost approximately £8m.
 - Local London (East London – LL): LL will deliver an economic inactivity trailblazer and will work with its constituent boroughs to design and deliver bespoke interventions tailored to local needs. Local authorities would also use the trailblazer resource to identify demand using data, community engagement, designing bespoke programmes to address specific challenges and adapt interventions based on real-time feedback and emerging needs. Its core target groups will include, but are not limited to women, people with disabilities and long-term health conditions, carers, and people with below Level 2 skills. This intervention will cost approximately £8m.
 - South London Partnership (SLP): SLP will deliver an economic inactivity trailblazer and will embed outreach teams across health and care partners, voluntary and community organisations, local authority teams, and existing brokerage centres, and further develop referral pathways between partners. Through this they intend to create holistic work and health services co-located in local strategic partnership centres, ensuring that all individuals with a disability or health condition have access to employment support if needed. This intervention will cost approximately £4m.
 - Central London Forward (CLF): CLF will deliver a youth guarantee trailblazer and aim to support care leavers in central London to progress toward and move into employment, education and training. The trailblazer will build the evidence base about what works in supporting care leavers into employment, education and training, and facilitate implementation. This intervention will cost approximately £5m.
- 2.6. The GLA will deploy staff to each trailblazer, who will work across GLA and London Councils to coordinate research and data join-up work, convene key stakeholders, and work with SRPs to identify best practice within London and internationally, and pilot these new approaches in the capital. They would also work to roll-out the trailblazer brand once it has been developed.
- 2.7. The GLA proposes that the remaining £5m is used to cover the contract management of the four (three economic inactivity and one youth) grant funding agreements (GFAs) to SRPs for sub-regional delivery of the Trailblazers, to cover the pan-London coordination posts (above), and to further develop a pan-London youth trailblazer.

2.8. Final delivery proposals have been drawn up following consultation. Interventions piloted or expanded within the pan-London Youth Trailblazer may include:

- an expansion/enhancement of the innovative NWD model in London³. The GLA might look into developing a one-stop shop outline to build capacity of youth advisors and consistency of the offer to young Londoners
- an expansion of the NWD model where the hubs are resourced to develop sub-regional youth 'hubs' and networks, adopting lessons learned from Central London Forward's NWD Integration Hub
- the GLA acting as a central convenor, developing Data Sharing Agreements (DSAs) with boroughs and other partners to begin tracking young people into and out of the Youth Guarantee, and at key transition point.
- the development and maintenance of an online resource /directory of youth provision, building off mapping and other scoping work as outlined above
- working closely with SRPs to identify other target youth groups and commission innovative targeted local delivery where it meets the trailblazer objectives.

Process behind final trailblazer delivery plans and submission

- 2.9. Final proposals for the youth Trailblazers were submitted in February 2025, and we will be submitting the final economic inactivity Trailblazer proposals in March. DWP colleagues have reiterated that while these are final submissions, the process of reviewing and finalising these plans will be iterative and done in collaboration with the GLA. There will still be room for iteration as we move closer to the delivery phase. Final proposal submissions can be found in appendix B.
- 2.10. Current proposals cover the financial year 2025-26. However, London government is calling for budget to be used more flexibly, with the potential to carry over into the next financial year(s). This would provide better value for money as provision could be better planned and not stopped on a cliff edge. We do not consider one year as a sufficient timeframe to bring about system change and fully test new approaches. We continue to call for multi-year Trailblazer funding.
- 2.11. This decision proposes the delegation of authority to the Assistant Directors – Skills and Employment to make all further programme-level decisions and financial commitments without the need for a further decision form. This will enable the efficient approval of grant and contract awards for this project which is necessitated by the short timeframe to get into delivery.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. Section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010 provides that, in the exercise of their functions, public authorities must have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

³ No Wrong Door is an initiative that helps bring together employment and skills providers, funders, and other public services in London. The initiative aims to make it easier for Londoners to access high-quality support for their employment and skills needs. It is delivered by City Hall in partnership with London Councils, London's four sub-regional partnerships, and Jobcentre Plus.

- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 3.2. Relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
- 3.3. In accordance with these duties, and in recognising the sometimes complex and multiple barriers to appropriate education, employment, training and wraparound support for these groups, the Trailblazers will target groups furthest from the labour market and include the following principles:
- **Intersectionality:** The Trailblazers will take an intersectional approach to addressing youth and economic inactivity. This means considering the multiple, intersecting barriers that different groups of young people and economically inactive individuals might face, such as race, gender, disability, and socio-economic background. For instance, economically inactive individuals with disabilities, or young people from ethnic minority backgrounds, may face compounded barriers in accessing services, and specific strategies should be in place to address these needs
 - **Youth Inclusivity:** The GLA will promote youth voice and co-design in the development and implementation of services. Ensuring that young people, especially from marginalised communities, are actively involved in shaping services will foster more inclusive and relevant interventions. This could include engaging with youth groups that represent underrepresented communities (e.g. BAME, LGBTQ+, young people with disabilities), and ensuring services are responsive to their unique needs
 - **Tailored Support for Vulnerable Groups:** Trailblazer activity will reach out to and support vulnerable groups within the economically inactive population. This includes care leavers, people with disabilities, those experiencing mental health challenges, and people from other disadvantaged backgrounds. Specific innovative interventions will be designed to target these groups, possibly through bespoke services or partnerships with specialised providers
 - **Local Community Engagement:** The GLA is working with London Councils and the SRPs to actively engage with local community organisations, particularly those with experience in supporting underrepresented groups, to ensure services are culturally sensitive, accessible, and appropriate for the local context.
- 3.4. The Trailblazers will also encourage collaboration between youth services, local schools, community groups, and health organisations will enhance inclusivity and service reach.
- 3.5. An Equality Impact Assessment is also being prepared and is scheduled to be published ahead of entering into grant agreements.

4. Other considerations

4.1. Risks arising and mitigation

Risk	Mitigation
Due to the short timeframes for this project, there is a risk that in the development stage we are unable to gain useful buy-in from external stakeholders. This could impact delivery and achieving the aim of joining up existing local provision.	We have mitigated this risk by convening two external stakeholder working groups in the initial development stage of the Trailblazers which were well attended and generated useful feedback. In the set-up phase, we have committed more funds and staff resource to hosting trailblazer conferences and supporting the joining-up

	of key stakeholders throughout the trailblazer delivery phase.
The nature of London's size means that funding of this amount will not have impact if we try to develop too many interventions.	We will focus on trialling pilots in smaller areas which can be evaluated to understand how they would work at scale. DWP have provided further feedback in this area which we have iteratively built into the final Trailblazer proposals.
There is a risk that partners across London, especially SRPs, begin to communicate directly with DWP/DfE, leaving GLA out of the loop. This would risk jeopardising GLA and London Councils' ability to effectively deliver its pan-London coordination piece of the Trailblazers.	To mitigate this risk, we have agreed to develop a 'ways of working' agreement with DWP/DfE trailblazer colleagues to ensure that London Councils and GLA are looped in on any direct communications with the SRPs but will not create a bottleneck by restricting communications to only coming through the GLA.
We have included concerns about the timeframe of delivery and spending on this project and will continue to monitor delivery against this timeframe.	We will continue conversations with DWP/DfE about the carrying over of funds to ensure full value for money, and DWP/DfE have confirmed that conversations are ongoing to understand if the trailblazer funding will be renewed on a multi-year basis.

Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

- 4.2. The economic inactivity Trailblazers will be key in developing understanding to inform the government's 'Work, Health and Skills Plans', also trailed in the Get Britain Working White Paper, and will support development of our rationale to increase integration between services.
- 4.3. Robust evaluation of the Trailblazer programme in London will allow us to understand where there are opportunities to scale up pilots and further inform our vision for an employment and support system in London after an integrated settlement, in which the GLA leads on the delivery of employment support in the capital.
- 4.4. The Trailblazers will build on the existing work in the NWD Programme integration hubs that build referral pathways and help Londoners to access the full range of support available to them.
- 4.5. The Trailblazers will support the integration of employment and skills provision and support with work being undertaken by colleagues in the Health sector. This has previously proved difficult due to ICB boundaries, complexities in the sharing of data and the scale of primary and secondary care provision across London. The Trailblazers will be an opportunity to embed movement towards work as a key health outcome.
- 4.6. The Get Britain Working White Paper noted that economic inactivity trailblazer areas will feed into the development of the new Jobs and Careers Services in their areas, giving us an opportunity to co-design this service to meet the needs of Londoners. In doing so, the Trailblazer will further build our rationale and evidence to achieve our wider devolution asks calling for greater flexibility for systems design in London.
- 4.7. The Trailblazers will help establish London's role in locally directed employment support and health as part of an integrated Inclusive Talent System.

Conflicts of interest

- 4.8. There are no conflicts of interest from those involved in the drafting or clearance of this decision form.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1. Mayoral approval is sought for the receipt and expenditure of £30m awarded to the GLA by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) towards the London Get Britain Working Trailblazers as a section 31 ringfenced grant under the Local Government Act 2003. This programme has been designed to focus on joining up existing local provision in the work, health and skills, and youth space respectively, with an emphasis on innovative approaches. This is a fully externally funded programme managed by DWP. It is imperative that all funding is spent in 2025-26. No carry forward of funding will be permitted as it stands.
- 5.2. The GLA will be the accountable body for the Trailblazers, working closely with London Councils and London's four Sub-Regional Partnerships (SRPs) to deliver them. The proposed allocation methodology is for four sub-regional approaches with an approximate cost envelope of £25m. Specifically, West London Alliance (WLA) and Local London (LL) will receive £8m each, Central London Forward (CLF) will receive £5m, and South London Partnership (SLP) will receive £4m. The GLA will retain £5m for the additional pan-London strategic interventions. It is anticipated that the funding agreements will be signed in March 2025. Funding within this £5m has also been set aside for management and administration and pan-London coordination. The funding envelope will be contained within the Skills and Employment budget with allocations for 2025-26 subject to approval through the annual budget setting process.
- 5.3. Further approval is also being sought to delegate authority to the Assistant Directors – Skills and Employment to make all further programme-level decisions and financial commitments in line with local governance arrangements and without the need for a further decision form.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1. The foregoing sections of this report indicate that the decisions requested of the Mayor and the Assistant Directors – Skills and Employment 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 economic development and wealth creation and 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 Mayor and the Assistant Directors – Skills and Employment 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 and the Assistant Directors – Skills and Employment should have particular regard to section 3 (above) of this report.

- 6.3. Section 1 above indicates that the contribution of £30m to the GLA amounts to the provision of grant funding and not payment for works, services or supplies. Officers must ensure that the funding be distributed fairly, transparently, in accordance with the GLA's equalities duty and with the requirements of section 12 of the Authority's Contracts and Funding Code.
- 6.4. Furthermore, officers must ensure that an appropriate funding agreement be put in place between the Department for Work and Pensions and the GLA before any (a) commitment to fund is made; and (b) funding is paid to the GLA. Additionally, officers must ensure that any commitment to grant funding is an auditable form in relation to the subject matter of this decision form.
- 6.5. Any function exercisable by the Mayor on behalf of the Authority may also be exercised by the Assistant Directors – Skills and Employment, albeit subject to any conditions, which the Mayor sees fit to impose. To this end, the Mayor may make the requested delegation to Assistant Directors – Skills and Employment if he so choose.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
GLA works with SRPs / LCs to gear up to trailblazer delivery	March-April 2025
Activity outlined in set-up grant proposals is carried out to further inform trailblazer delivery. This will include hosting some larger scale conferences (via set-up grant funding) to conduct service user design, begin delivery of key systems change activity, and build the network of engaged stakeholders. These may also serve as the official launch of the Trailblazers in London.	March-April 2025
Equalities Impact Assessment for the Trailblazers realised	March 2025
DWP grant signing	March 2025
Grant agreement signing with London SRPs	March 2025
Trailblazers begin delivery	April 2025
Trailblazer delivery end date, and funds must be spent	March 2026

Appendices and supporting papers:

Appendix A - Full objectives and aims of the Get Britain Working Trailblazers

Appendix B - London GBW trailblazer final proposal submissions

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 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:

Rohan Gupta 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:

Howard Dawber has been consulted about the proposal and agrees the recommendations.

✓

Advice:

The Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal.

✓

Mayoral Delivery Board

This decision was agreed by the Mayoral Delivery Board on 24 March 2025

✓

CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

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

Signature:

Fay Hurren

Date:

25/03/2025

CHIEF OF STAFF:

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

Signature:

D. Bellamy

Date:

24/03/2025

