

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2767

Funding for the London Housing Panel from April 2025 until March 2028

Executive summary:

The London Housing Panel (the Panel) was established jointly by the Mayor and Trust for London in April 2019. The Panel exists to provide London's voluntary and community sector organisations with a structured forum to consider housing issues; and to engage with the Mayor, the GLA and other decision-makers.

This decision seeks approval to grant Trust for London £75,000, so that it can continue running the Panel from 1 April 2025 until the end of March 2028. Trust for London will in addition award the Panel £90,000 of their own funding for this period.

Decision:

That the Assistant Director of Land and Development approves granting Trust for London £75,000, to run the Panel from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2028. This breaks down as follows:

- £25,000 in 2025-26
- £25,000 in 2026-27
- £25,000 in 2027-28.

AUTHORISING ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/HEAD OF UNIT

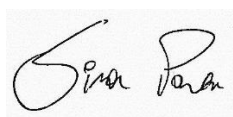
I have reviewed the request and am satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.

It has my approval.

Name: Simon Powell

Position: Assistant Director, Land and Development

Signature:



Date:

21/07/2025

PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. The London Housing Panel (the Panel) was established by the Mayor and Trust for London in April 2019. It was set up to build on the Mayor's existing community engagement work; and to provide a structured forum for the voluntary and community sector to consider housing issues, and inform the Mayor's housing policies.
- 1.2. The Panel membership consists of a Chair and up to 15 members working in the voluntary and community sector. Meetings are attended by the Deputy Mayor for Housing and Residential Development (or, if the Deputy Mayor cannot attend, the Executive Director of Housing and Land), alongside two GLA officers. Commonweal Housing currently coordinates the secretariat and project management support for the Panel.
- 1.3. The Mayor's Budget for 2025-28 confirmed an allocation of £600,000, within the Housing and Land budget, to implement Lord Kerslake's recommendations and continue the Panel's work.
- 1.4. Since its launch in 2019, the Panel has held quarterly formal meetings. Its policy priorities cover three themes:
 - the urgent need to build more social housing
 - the importance of understanding the needs and aspirations of all Londoners to ensure house building creates better longer-term outcomes for Londoners
 - the need to take urgent action to address homelessness and temporary accommodation.
- 1.5. Since launching, the Panel (which is member-led) has continuously performed the four ongoing objectives it agreed with the GLA (see 2.2, below). Its achievements since the current funding period began are as follows:
 - developed a discussion note on the costs and benefits of a net increase in the supply of social rented homes in London
 - developed and delivered the Planning for London Community Conversations¹
 - developed and delivered the Social Housing Community Conversations with social housing tenants across London
 - oversaw the joint commissioning of Groundswell to deliver the Encounters & Conversations pilot in the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea²
 - provided consultation responses³
 - delivered a programme of internal work, "Developing an inclusive and coherent panel", to ensure the Panel continues to represent London's diverse communities.

¹ In summer 2023, the Panel supported a series of 10 community conversations, with people whose voices are not heard in discussions about housing and planning. This was part of the Planning for London programme to develop a new London Plan.

² In October 2024, Trust for London, the GLA and the London Housing Directors' Group jointly commissioned a legislative theatre event. This aimed to facilitate conversations between housing options staff and people living in temporary accommodation.

³ The Mayor's public consultation on Key Worker Living Rent as a form of rent-control homes for Londoners; and the Mayor's Towards a new London Plan consultation.

- 1.6. Funding of the Panel to date is detailed in the table below (note that the funding requested in this ADD2767 is included in the final row):

Decision	Period	GLA funding	Trust for London funding
ADD2399	April 2019 – March 2020	£30,000	£20,000
ADD2412	April 2020 – July 2020	£10,000	£10,000
ADD2450	August 2020 – July 2021	£30,000	£30,000
ADD2525	August 2021 – March 2022	£23,000	£24,000
DD2592	April 2022 – March 2025	£75,000	£69,362
ADD2767	April 2025 – March 2028	£75,000	£90,000

- 1.7. This decision seeks to continue funding the Panel, for April 2025 to March 2028, at the same annual rate as the previous funding period. Trust for London has committed to fund the Panel for at least £90,000 in this period; and to indemnify the Panel against any variations in the cost of the newly recruited Secretariat (Commonweal Housing), notably during the onboarding period (expected to last until July 2025).

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1. This decision seeks approval to grant-fund the panel £75,000 from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2028. This will be broken down equally across 2025-26, 2026-27 and 2027-28 (£25,000 per year). The Panel's total funding over this period is £165,000.
- 2.2. This funding aims to provide the time and resource for the Panel to achieve its goals, as outlined in the Panel's Terms of Reference:
- to ensure that the Mayor's policies on housing reflect the needs of Londoners who have been disadvantaged and/or are living precariously
 - to add weight to the Mayor's work when it fits with the values and purpose of the Panel's work, and the needs of the Panel's communities
 - to support and challenge the Mayor in thinking differently about the housing solutions and options that will most benefit those living in poverty
 - where relevant, to make connections between housing and other related issues – such as welfare reform, health and wellbeing, and the environment.
- 2.3. The Trust for London, on behalf of the Panel, will deliver the following milestones:
- contracting a new Secretariat for the Panel, including a six-month onboarding period, to ensure continuity in early 2025
 - four meetings per year between 2025 and 2028, with attendance from Panel members, the Chair, Trust for London and the GLA
 - managing internal and external communications relating to the Panel
 - attendance by the Panel's Independent Chair at high-priority groups or events whose remit relates to the Panel's priorities, to ensure the Panel's views and priorities are represented
 - working groups to further the Panel's objectives (currently focused on housing supply, the voice of Londoners, and temporary accommodation), and accepting that these working groups may change over the next three years, if required
 - administering payment of fees and expenses for Panel members and the Chair

- providing a venue, refreshments and sundry expenses for the Panel's routine operations
 - scheduling and attending regular project-management meetings with the GLA.
- 2.4. The goals, objectives and milestones detailed above will continue the Panel's current work programme. A joint plan for 2025-26, between the Panel and the GLA, has also been developed; this identifies opportunities for the Panel to support the work of the Mayor and the GLA.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, functions of the GLA exercisable by the Mayor are subject to a public sector equality duty, and must have 'due regard' to the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 3.2. Protected characteristics under section 149 of the Equality Act are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage or civil partnership.
- 3.3. The Panel was created to bring together London's voluntary and community sector organisations to consider housing issues; and engage with the Mayor, the GLA and other decision-makers on this topic. The Panel is intended to have a positive equalities impact by providing additional channels to better enable Londoners with protected characteristics to feed into the Mayor's housing policies via Panel members.
- 3.4. A key consideration when recruiting Panel members is ensuring that membership represents London's diverse communities. Since the previous funding period, the Panel has delivered an internal work programme, "Developing an inclusive and coherent panel", that has sought to ensure recruitment to the Panel reflects London's diverse communities. Through this programme, the Panel has ensured that it can represent the perspectives of racialised communities and disabled people by recruiting the Anti-Tribalism Movement and Inclusion London as Panel members.
- 3.5. Other member organisations representing protected characteristics include Action for Refugees in Lewisham, London Gypsies and Travellers, Solace Women's Aid, Tonic Housing Association, and YMCA St Paul's Group. Praxis, an organisation supporting migrants, also attends panel meetings as a guest.⁴
- 3.6. The Panel's own work supports the GLA's responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. The Community Conversations projects sought to capture the views of Londoners, whose voices are less likely to be heard, in conversations on housing and planning. Similarly, the work of the Temporary Accommodation Working Group – to oversee the joint commissioning of the Encounters & Conversation legislative theatre project – enabled the perspectives of households living in temporary accommodation to be heard, and to shape policy within a London borough. The Panel's consultation responses also enable the communities represented by each Panel member organisation to inform the development of GLA policy.

4. Other considerations

- 4.1. The Mayor is committed to giving Londoners a voice in developing housing and planning policies. The Panel strengthens the Mayor's efforts to involve Londoners in policymaking. It does so by developing and delivering work such as the two Community Conversations projects, and responses to the Mayor's consultations (see 1.6). The Panel's work will also contribute to the delivery of the following mayoral mandates:

⁴ Other Panel members include Action on Empty Homes, Generation Rent, Homeless Link, Kineara, North West London Law Centre, London Federation of Housing Co-operatives, London Renters Union and London Tenants Federation.

- accommodation and wider support for those who need it most
 - improving London's housing stock
 - building more homes
 - reducing inequalities.
- 4.2. Each of these mandates align with the Panel's goals outlined in 2.2. GLA officers have worked alongside the Panel to develop a joint plan for 2025-26. This details opportunities for the Panel to deliver work that supports the GLA and the Mayor to meet the following strategic outcomes:
- Londoners are treated fairly and with dignity
 - Londoners live in homes they can afford
 - Londoners are not homeless
 - Londoners' homes are safe and decent.
- 4.3. GLA officers will work with the Panel to develop further plans (for 2026-27 and 2027-28) that will continue to align with these outcomes. Panel activity for 2025-26 will include work such as:
- delivering the second set of Community Conversations with social housing tenants
 - supporting the development of the new London Plan
 - working with London Councils and the GLA to bring the voices of lived experience into the development of policies and plans to accelerate an end to homelessness in London.

Conflicts of interest

- 4.4. There are no conflicts of interest to note for any of those involved in the drafting or clearance of the decision.

Data protection, health, and safeguarding

- 4.5. There are no considerations pertaining to data protection, health or safeguarding.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1. The Assistant Director of Land and Development approves granting £75,000 to Trust for London as contribution towards the cost of running the Panel from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2028. The grant is expected to be £25,000 per annum from 2025-26 to 2027-28.
- 5.2. The grant over the three years is proposed to be funded from the Kerslake programme budget, which is included in the 2025-26 to 2027-28 budget. However, for 2026-27 and 2027-28 this is subject to the budget-setting and approval process. Therefore, should this budget change in future years, the directorate will need to find an alternative source of funding.
- 5.3. The grant will be managed by the Housing Policy team within the Housing and Land directorate.

6. Planned delivery approach and next steps

- 6.1. The GLA will award £75,000 to Trust for London via a funding agreement. Trust for London will meet the remaining project costs of £90,000. The funding will allow the Panel to meet formally four times per year from April 2025 to March 2028; and to deliver the essential operations.

Activity	Timeline
Funding agreement in place	August 2025
Main Panel meetings	March, June, September and December annually until March 2028

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:

Velvet Dibley has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Mayoral Delivery Board

A summary of this decision was reviewed by the Mayoral Delivery Board on 21 July 2025.

✓

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, FINANCIAL SERVICES:

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

Signature:



Date:

21/07/2025