

## **Mayoral Mandate**

### **Helping Local Economies to Thrive**

#### **Introduction**

As Mayor of London, I am determined to help secure stable, long-term economic growth that works for all our communities and ensures we can continue to build a fairer, safer and greener London for everyone. The strength of our economy is critical to Londoners' quality of life and to the wider prosperity of London and the UK.

That's why I am developing a new Growth Plan for London in partnership with London's local authorities and in close collaboration with businesses, universities and colleges, trade unions and civil society. We have set a target of helping to create more than 150,000 good jobs by 2028 and increasing living standards for Londoners.

London's high streets, town centres and other local economic hubs generate employment and growth across the capital. They also form a key part of our local communities. A core aim of the growth plan is to set out how the success of London's high streets can be secured, including through support for the productive and resilient small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) on which many depend. This work is pivotal to our support of the government's mission to kickstart economic growth.

This mandate commissions my City Hall team to define how best the GLA and the GLA Group, working in partnership with others, can achieve this.

A thriving nightlife is also critical for the success of our city and economy; this mandate will also commission my team to support our city's night-time hospitality and culture, including through convening a London Nightlife Taskforce. I expect this mandate to be read alongside the mandate for *Boosting London's Growth Sectors*. I expect the delivery plans to be developed in tandem to ensure that the creation of wider benefits through local supply chains can be maximised.

Other important interactions should be with: *Making Best Use of Land* (support for inclusive and sustainable mixed-use development through planning policy); and *Supporting Londoners to Benefit from Growth*. I expect to see these connections come through the delivery plan for this programme.

#### **Strategic objectives**

The GLA has defined a number of London-level, long-term outcomes which reflect Londoners' aspirations for the city and to which the GLA, in partnership with others, is working towards. The core outcome to which this programme should contribute is: high streets and town centres are thriving across London.

This reflects the key role of London's local SMEs in generating employment opportunities and sustainable growth in the areas of the economy that provide the goods and services essential for everyday life.

Alongside this, the wider London-level outcomes to which I expect this programme to make a substantive contribution are: stable, long-term economic growth benefits all of London's communities; Londoners have access to good work; Londoners live in neighbourhoods that are well planned and designed; Londoners feel able to take part in the city's cultural life; and London is a net zero carbon city.

The delivery plan for this programme should recognise the different types of local places that are important to London's growth, in particular:

- high streets and town centres – accommodating 41 per cent of all of London's businesses, and providing access to a range of goods, services, social functions and cultural activities at different times of the day and night
- light industrial areas – often hosting a broad mix of SMEs, and providing social infrastructure, such as wholesale markets, as well as production space for cultural institutions and more.

### **Programme approaches and priorities**

The delivery plan for this programme should focus on six key areas of activity (to be kept under review in light of the continuing work on the London Growth Plan) as set out below:

**Small business support:** Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) employ Londoners across the capital and are the lifeblood of our high streets and local economies. However, following the pandemic, and inflation-driven increases in the cost of doing business, many are focused on survival rather than growth. The delivery plan should consider how to support these businesses to thrive and to build resilience. This could include continuing the provision of support and advice to SMEs, alongside new interventions to tackle issues such as access to finance at a local level.

**Access to space:** Access to affordable work and studio space, including appropriate light industrial facilities, is a core challenge in London. The delivery plan should consider how the GLA will work with partners to address this through established models, such as the Creative Land Trust, and through support and advice for community and cultural organisations and SMEs. It should also examine options for potential new approaches, such as a public-sector real estate brokerage.

**Capital exemplar project delivery:** Capital projects can help to meet local needs, demonstrate best practice and prototype solutions to city-scale challenges. The GLA should complete a number of ongoing programmes (including, in particular, the Civic Partnerships Fund) and disseminate the learning from GLA-led work in this area. We should also develop any future GLA funds or programmes (subject to external funding being identified) to enable ongoing innovation and delivery in partnership with boroughs, businesses, anchor institutions and communities.

**Place activation:** The delivery plan should explore to what extent the GLA could support local partners to make the most of underused spaces.

**Placemaking capacity and capability:** There is an acute shortage of placemaking capacity and capability across the public sector. The delivery plan should therefore recognise that the GLA has an important role in convening sectoral expertise, pooling resources and coordinating partnerships through: the provision of place-based support; the use of data to inform local decision-making; and network development to support peer learning, the sharing of best practice and innovation.

**Supporting London's nightlife:** I have always been a passionate advocate for London's nightlife. The delivery plan should set out how the GLA will continue to protect the music venues, creative studios, pubs and clubs that make London such a dynamic creative capital. It should also set out how the GLA will continue to work with London boroughs to develop night-

time strategies to support our city to thrive at night, and plans to convene a London Nightlife Taskforce and draw together a Nightlife Fund.

### **Contribution to cross-cutting priorities**

The programme should identify where it can make a substantive, positive contribution to the areas identified as cross-cutting priorities for the GLA. I expect that the key areas of focus for this programme will be around:

- Addressing structural inequalities – ensuring that advice and support reach SME owners from disadvantaged and under-represented backgrounds, and that places are supported to be accessible and welcoming to all Londoners
- Net-zero and Health in all policies – recognising the potential of retrofitting homes and buildings, the circular economy and the Healthy Streets agenda
- Night-time economy – ensuring high streets and town centres (and other relevant locations) provide healthy, safe, prosperous and inclusive places for Londoners around the clock.

### **Resources**

In 2024-25, this programme draws on c. £8m of revenue funding (excluding staffing costs), comprising c. £3m core GLA funding, plus c. £5m of UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) 'Supporting Local Business' funding allocated to London & Partners for SME support. It also draws on a capital budget of c. £24m, of which £15m has been allocated directly to boroughs via the UKSPF's 'Communities and Place' strand and the remainder in large part to third-party projects via the Good Growth Fund and other programmes.

Alongside this, up to £6.9m returning capital loans from the Growing Places Fund are expected to become available for redeployment by the end of 2024-25. The delivery plan should set out how these can be used to support this programme.

These programme budgets do not include current staffing costs associated with activity laid out in this mandate. Our deployment of staffing across mandates may change once delivery plans have been developed.

Recognising the significant current fiscal challenges both in London and at national level, I expect the delivery plan to be developed in this context, and to demonstrate what can be achieved within the current level of funding. This should include setting out how resources might be most effectively redeployed as flexibility emerges over the course of this Mayoral term, and any interventions aimed at securing additional funding to support delivery. Any planning for the allocation of UKSPF funding in 2025-26 will need to be done in the context of the national budget.

Should significant further funds be allocated to this programme (whether from GLA resources or external sources), the delivery plan should be updated to reflect this.

### **Senior Responsible Owner**

I expect the Assistant Director, Planning and Regeneration, to be the Senior Responsible Owner of this programme, with my Deputy Mayors for Planning, Regeneration and the Fire Service, for Culture and the Creative Industries, and for Business and Growth to provide ongoing oversight and political direction, along with other colleagues from my office, on my behalf.

### **Next steps**

I expect the Mayoral Delivery Board to recommend a delivery plan for this programme to me in line with our governance and oversight arrangements.

**January 2025**