

Board name: Oxford Street Development Corporation (OSDC) Board

Title of report:	Shared Services and transfer of contracts and liabilities to the Oxford Street Development Corporation
Report of:	Chair of the Board
Date:	7 January 2026
Public Access:	This report will be considered in public.

1. Summary

- 1.1. This paper asks the Board to approve the proposed arrangements for utilising shared services with a number of different organisations across the Greater London Authority (GLA) Group. The Mayor has made clear his desire to see more shared services across the GLA Group, to facilitate the efficient use of resources. The establishment of the Oxford Street Development Corporation (OSDC) will seek to be an exemplar in shared services, drawing upon the best services across the GLA Group and the whole public sector.
- 1.2. This paper also seeks approval of the novation of contracts from the GLA to the OSDC. This covers key contracts that the GLA entered into prior to the establishment of OSDC to support the delivery of the Oxford Street Transformation Programme. Following Board approval, and subject to further Mayoral approval, it is expected the contracts will be novated as early as practicable in January – February 2026.

2. Recommendations

The Board is invited to:

- 2.1. **Approve in-principle** the proposed arrangements for shared services between the OSDC and the Greater London Authority (GLA), Transport for London (TfL), Mayor's Office of Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC);
- 2.2. **Approve** the delegation of approval of the detailed shared services arrangements to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) – including any interim appointees to this role;
- 2.3. **Approve in-principle** the transfer of public realm and planning application software contracts and financial liabilities from the GLA to the OSDC, subject to further Mayoral approval and the novation of contracts through due process; and
- 2.4. **Note** that the OSDC's CEO will execute the deed of novation.

3. Background

Shared Service Agreements

- 3.1. To date the functions of the transitional OSDC Team have been hosted by the GLA. The OSDC is at a very early stage in its development. Given that the OSDC will be a functional

body and a statutory planning authority, subject to parliamentary process, there are a number of services required to ensure the smooth operations of the Corporation.

- 3.2. Given that the OSDC is a small organisation, it is advantageous for the OSDC to continue to utilise many of the GLA's and TfL's services that it has had access to during the interim set-up stage and utilise additional services from the wider GLA Group rather than provide them in-house. In addition, there are a number of new service areas relating to specific functions (e.g. internal audit) where the OSDC will need support.
- 3.3. The continued provision of these functions will ensure that services can be provided in the most efficient and cost-effective manner. This will have the added benefit of creating the scope for further economies of scale and the sharing of best practice across the GLA Group.
- 3.4. It is therefore recommended that the OSDC enters into agreements with four different categories of service providers. These are as follows:
 - GLA, for Secretariat / Committee Services and Treasury Management services
 - TfL, for Human Resources (recruitment, onboarding and back office), IT, Finance (payments processing and back office), Occupational Health, Procurement and Legal services
 - MOPAC, for internal audit services
 - LLDC, for insurance services.
- 3.5. Indicative annual costings for each of these shared services areas and additional information on the nature of support are provided in **Appendix A**. These will be reviewed as detailed shared services agreements (SSAs) are developed.
- 3.6. SSAs will be reviewed as part of the OSDC's annual budget-setting process by the Director of Finance and Corporate Operations in consultation with the CEO and relevant members of the senior leadership team, in order to ensure they deliver best value for the Corporation.
- 3.7. The Board is invited to **approve in-principle** the proposed arrangements for shared services between the OSDC and the GLA, TfL, MOPAC and the LLDC; and to **approve** the delegation of approval of the detailed shared services arrangements to the CEO – including any interim appointments to this role.

Transfer of Contracts from the GLA to OSDC

Public realm design contracts

- 3.8. In October 2025 the GLA appointed Hawkins Brown and East architects to work together on the design and delivery of the Oxford Street Transformation.
- 3.9. **Appendix B** provides more information about the total contract value and scope. It is proposed that the GLA novates this contract to the OSDC, which would take on the liabilities for the remaining activities to be delivered under these contracts.
- 3.10. The Board is invited to **approve** the novation of these contracts from the GLA to the OSDC, subject to further Mayoral approval and the novation of contracts through due process and to note that the OSDC's CEO – including any interim appointments to this role - will execute the deed of contract novation.

Planning back-office system contracts

- 3.11. It is expected that the OSDC will become the local planning authority (LPA) for the Oxford Street MDA in Spring 2026 (subject to parliamentary process), for the functions and powers described in section 202(2) to (5) of the Localism Act 2011. This means the OSDC would determine planning applications and take on development and plan-making functions, as well as other planning functions relating to planning enforcement, tree management, advertisement, listed buildings and conservation areas.
- 3.12. It would receive all planning applications submitted in the area; and would be responsible for validating, publicising, consulting on, assessing and determining those applications in accordance with the relevant legislation. This legislation is, principally, the Town and Country Planning Act 1990; and the procedures set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. These include specific requirements in relation to statutory timescales for determining different types of applications; publicising applications for planning permission; undertaking consultation; and maintaining a public register of planning applications.
- 3.13. To fulfil these functions, and like any other LPA, the OSDC will use a back-office system. All LPAs use specialist software to manage the process of receiving, validating, consulting on, reporting on and determining planning applications, and other development management functions (including requests for pre-application advice; appeals; Environment Impact Assessment screening and scoping requests; and enforcement cases).
- 3.14. In summer 2025, the GLA entered a contract with Arcus Limited to build the OSDC's planning back-office system. The long lead times to deliver this back-office system meant work had to be initiated before the OSDC becomes the LPA for the Oxford Street Mayoral Development Area, subject to parliamentary process. In November 2025, the GLA entered a contract with Terraquest Solutions who will deliver development work to allow the OSDC to accept digital planning applications through the 'Planning Portal'. This assignment includes the creation of OSDC as a new planning authority on the Planning Portal system, but also amendments to the boundaries of the London Borough of Camden and Westminster City Council to reflect the creation of the OSDC. This will ensure that applications are allocated to the correct authority when the OSDC becomes the LPA for the Oxford Street area, subject to Parliamentary process.
- 3.15. **Appendix B** provides more information about the total contracts values and scope. It is proposed that the GLA novates these contracts to the OSDC, which would take on the liabilities for the remaining activities to be delivered under these contracts.
- 3.16. The Board is invited to **approve in-principle** the transfer of these contracts and financial liabilities to OSDC, subject to further Mayoral approval and the novation of contracts through due process and to note that the OSDC's CEO – including any interim appointments to this role - will execute the deed of contract novation.

4. Issues for Consideration

- 4.1. Prior to entering into any SSAs with the GLA, a consultation with the London Assembly must be undertaken. A paper was taken to the London Assembly Oversight Committee on 12 November 2025 outlining the proposal that the OSDC will enter into agreement with the GLA for the provision of Secretariat/Committee Services and Treasury Management Services through London Treasury Limited. Following a decision from the Board, a Mayoral

Decision will be required to formally approve the establishment of SSAs between the OSDC and the GLA.

- 4.2. While provisional arrangements have been agreed with relevant GLA Group organisations to ensure OSDC is supported until formal SSAs are finalised, the approval of the proposals is urgent as it will allow the OSDC to make the necessary arrangements to allow it to function as a separate functional body from the GLA from 1 January 2026.

Risks and Issues

- 4.3. Without SSAs in place for these different functions, the OSDC will be unable to operate efficiently. This includes, but is not limited to, progressing recruitment and staff onboarding (including occupational health checks), having access to IT support teams, procuring new IT equipment, getting timely legal advice on key decisions and/or other public facing materials, progressing procurement activities and kickstarting internal audit ahead of key year-end financial processes.

5. Equality Comments

- 5.1. The OSDC must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 which means it must when carrying out its functions have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, as well as to the need to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 5.2. By pursuing its proposed objectives to deliver an improved public realm, and provide a safe and welcoming environment, it is expected that the OSDC would make Oxford Street more inclusive and responsive to the needs of all Londoners and visitors – including those with protected characteristics. The public realm design work described in this MD would seek to create an attractive and inclusive neighbourhood that welcomes people of all ages and backgrounds.
- 5.3. The OSDC would be the single LPA for Oxford Street, subject to parliamentary process. It will be necessary to ensure that relevant planning services remain accessible and accountable to local communities, following statutory requirements and learning from best practices with regards to public engagement. The same principles will apply to the documents and any other content published and shared via the OSDC's online application system.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. The Board is asked to approve the proposed approach for shared services with the GLA, TfL, LLDC, and MOPAC for various services, and the transfer of contracts from the GLA to the OSDC to enable the OSDC to effectively function.
- 6.2. Indicative costings for these shared services in 2026-2027 is provided in **Appendix A**.
- 6.3. The shared services arrangements will operate on a cost-recovery basis, with any additional costs directly chargeable to the OSDC. If additional costs, over and above the budgeted amounts in paragraph 9.2, are expected to arise, they will be subject to formal discussion and agreement with the OSDC.

- 6.4. It is expected that the SSAs will be supplemented by a working arrangements document which will specify the services that will be delivered as part of the shared service and expectations are well understood, to ensure that the OSDC receives a good service. The Director of Finance and Corporate Operations will be responsible for raising any issues with the shared service providers in a timely manner to ensure that a good service is maintained.
- 6.5. The value of contracts to be transferred from the GLA to the OSDC is provided in **Appendix B**.
- 6.6. The OSDC has sufficient budget resources to fund the cost of these contracts (including shared services) in its first three months of operation in 2025-26, though the GLA: Mayor budget.
- 6.7. The OSDC budget for 2026-27 and future years will be confirmed through the GLA Group Budget Process to ensure that the OSDC has enough funding to operate, including for payments relating to these contracts.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1. Legal considerations have been taken into account in the preparation of this paper where applicable.

List of appendices to this report:

- **Appendix A:** Additional information about Shared Services Agreements (To be tabled - to allow the proper officer to confirm decisions under Part VA of Local Government Act 1972 regarding exempt information.)
- **Appendix B:** Additional information about GLA contracts proposed to be transferred to the OSDC (To be tabled - to allow the proper officer to confirm decisions under Part VA of Local Government Act 1972 regarding exempt information.)

List of background papers to this report: None.

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