

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2808

Reducing disruption caused by infrastructure delivery (Regulators' Pioneer Fund innovation funding)

Programme: Upgrading London's Infrastructure

Executive summary:

The Mayor approved the delivery plan for the strategic programme, Upgrading London's Infrastructure, in Mayoral Decision (MD) 3382.

In accordance with the delegated authority granted under MD3382, this Assistant Director Decision seeks approval from the Assistant Director of Connectivity, Air Quality, Transport and Infrastructure for receiving any additional funding from central government, or other sources, to expand approved projects in the Upgrading London's Infrastructure delivery plan.

This Assistant Director Decision relates to the receipt and spend of £294,483 of funding from the Regulators' Pioneer Fund. This will contribute to activities under intervention 3 of the Upgrading London's Infrastructure programme (reducing disruption caused by infrastructure delivery). As such, it will be used to limit impacts to Londoners and the road network – specifically, impacts created via the Aligning Cross-Sector Regulation to Enable Repurposing Abandoned Infrastructure Assets project.

Decision:

That the Assistant Director of Connectivity, Air Quality, Transport and Infrastructure approves:

- receiving £294,483 of funding in 2025-26 and 2026-27
- spending the above on:
 - a feasibility study, pilot and development of a scalable model focused on repurposing abandoned infrastructure assets – this will enable regulated utilities to deliver new infrastructure more efficiently, and reduce disruption
 - Infrastructure Coordination Service staff costs.

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: Elliot Treharne

Position: Assistant Director, Connectivity, Air Quality, Transport and Infrastructure

Signature:



Date:

2 February 2026

PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. The Mayoral mandate for the Upgrading London's Infrastructure programme and associated delivery plan was approved through Mayoral Decision (MD) 3382. MD3382 also delegated authority to the Assistant Director Connectivity Air Quality Transport Infrastructure to approve the receipt and expenditure of additional funding in relation to projects within the scope of the delivery plan. The Assistant Director is the approved Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for the programme.
- 1.2. The Upgrading London's Infrastructure delivery plan aims to ensure that London has the energy, water, digital connectivity and data infrastructure in place to achieve the Mayor's ambitious goals around net zero; climate resilience; housing delivery; and economic growth. It has four intervention strands:
 - enabling the new infrastructure needed for housing and productivity
 - readying London's infrastructure for the future
 - reducing disruption caused by infrastructure delivery
 - driving data innovation
- 1.3. This Assistant Director Decision requests approval to receive grant funding from the Regulator's Pioneer Fund against projects already detailed in the delivery plan, and progressing as part of the Aligning Cross-Sector Regulation to Enable Repurposing Abandoned Infrastructure Assets project. The grant funding is subject to the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT). Approval may be given by the Assistant Director with the delegated authority set out in MD3382, decisions three and four.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1. The core London-level outcomes to which this programme will contribute are:
 - London is a net-zero carbon city
 - London is resilient to extreme weather and the impacts of climate change
 - Londoners live in homes they can afford
 - stable, long-term economic growth benefits all of London's communities.
- 2.2. The objectives and expected outcomes of the Aligning Cross-Sector Regulation to Enable Repurposing Abandoned Infrastructure Assets project are linked to the Upgrading London's Infrastructure delivery plan. Specifically, they link with the following:
 - Intervention strand 3: reducing disruption caused by infrastructure delivery. This specifically covers:
 - reducing disruption by expanding the Lane Rental Scheme
 - deploying the 'dig once' approach
 - developing a new delivery framework to scale installation of sustainable urban drainage systems through streetworks.

- The Greater London Authority (GLA) – in partnership with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Transport for London and six regulated utilities – is seeking to explore options to repurpose abandoned infrastructure assets, to allow regulated utilities to install new infrastructure. This includes, for example, repurposing decommissioned water main pipes to service new telecommunications connections.
- There are approximately 3 million kilometres of underground assets nationally. Recent data indicates that there are 8,000 kilometres of abandoned assets within London across the water and gas sectors alone. This ever-increasing number is generating immense asset congestion; this, in turn, is constraining utilities' ability to deliver new infrastructure.
- The project will comprise:
 - feasibility study: investigating and addressing regulatory barriers to repurposing abandoned assets (including commercial blockers, liability and Construction (Design and Management) regulations)
 - pilot: assess use cases and undertake pilots
 - scalable model: design a mechanism to scale this approach.
- The MoU between the GLA and DSIT sets out the terms under which DSIT will provide £294,483 in grant funding to help deliver the project. This funding will be issued in accordance with DSIT's standard grant-funding procedures. The MoU outlines the responsibilities of the GLA, as the award recipient. This includes the requirement to ensure the programme is delivered in line with commitments made in the original funding application.
- As part of the funding conditions, the GLA will closely monitor the progress and impact of the funded activities throughout the funding period. This includes submitting a progress report covering key performance indicators; progress against objectives; any emerging risks and mitigation strategies; and planned next steps. These reports will be used for ongoing monitoring and evaluation purposes, to ensure the programme remains on track and delivers its intended outcomes.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Mayor and GLA must comply with the public sector equality duty (PSED) and must have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act
 - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
 - foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 3.2. The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership (but only in respect of the requirements to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination), race (ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality), religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex, and sexual orientation.

- 3.3. Consideration of the PSED is not a one-off task. The duty must be fulfilled before taking a decision, at the time of taking a decision, and after the decision has been taken, to ensure that equalities impacts are kept under ongoing review.
- 3.4. The Upgrading London's Infrastructure delivery plan helps achieve several of the Mayor's statutory equality objectives. Progress on delivery of these objectives is reported on each year in the Mayor's Annual Equality Report.
- 3.5. In line with the Mayor's ambitions, this delivery plan aims to improve all Londoners' access to essential services and housing. Reducing disruption on the road network through the Upgrading London's Infrastructure delivery plan will create benefits such as reduced noise and air pollution, which can have a disproportionate impact on neighbourhoods with vulnerable residents. Increasingly, we are seeing that streetworks collaborations produce a positive impact for many different beneficiaries – including residents and businesses.
- 3.6. Infrastructure and development work often reduces the accessibility of roads and the public realm; this has a negative impact on several groups with protected characteristics. The dig-once approach aims to minimise impacts upon these groups; and ensure their needs are considered, wherever possible, at an early stage of project planning. Cutting down the time streetworks take will also help improve accessibility across London. The dig-once approach looks to leave roads in a better condition than before, with healthy streets interventions that improve the quality of London's public realm. This is to ensure the public realm caters to the needs of all Londoners – but particularly those with protected characteristics, for whom navigating roads is otherwise a challenge.
- 3.7. Marginalised communities, and groups with protected characteristics, are often disproportionately affected by climate change risks (such as flooding and water scarcity); and a lack of access to blue and green spaces. The water-planning work will support Londoners to adapt, and be more resilient, to the growing issues of water scarcity, and poor water quality, in the face of climate change. It will identify areas currently prone to floods or at future risk of flooding; and ways to increase community resilience.

4. Other considerations

Risk assessment

- 4.1. The table below covers risks related to collaborative streetworks delivery, and the receipt of income:

Risk	Mitigation/response	Probability	Impact	Overall
Financial risk to the GLA, if income isn't received.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Regulator's Pioneer Fund has a standard MoU between all parties that commit to providing funding for the activities. • The GLA will follow the governance set out by the funder, to ensure funds are effectively used and received. • The GLA will not commit to any activities until funders have confirmed. 	Low	Medium	Green
Stakeholder expectations are not met, creating a reputational risk to the GLA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have a strong partnership with our project members, and a very good relationship with the Regulators' Pioneer Fund. • We have received this funding on the back of a strong and well-considered application. 	Low	High	Amber

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project group has regular meetings; and a structure for delivering activities related to this funding. 			
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Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

- 4.2. This work links to the following Mayoral strategies and priorities:

Strategy	Links
Environment Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with stakeholders to improve London's sewerage system so it is sustainable, resilient and cost-effective; and makes best use of innovation. Reduce risks and impacts of flooding in London on people and property; and improve water quality in London's rivers and waterways. Improve the efficiency of London's energy and water distribution networks, by improving coordination and master planning among providers; and between providers, boroughs and developers. Ensure long-term water resources and supply, to address risks of extreme heat and drought. Improve water quality in London's rivers; identify potential sources of pollution and pathways to improvement.
Housing Strategy	Help to improve viability of development by testing growth scenarios relative to capacity.
The London Plan	Make infrastructure assets and developments more efficient and resilient by engaging with providers at an earlier stage; and facilitate investment ahead of demand in utilities infrastructure.
The Mayor's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy	Work with partner organisations to improve diversity and inclusion across the infrastructure sector.

- 4.3. No one involved in the drafting or clearance of this document has any conflicts of interest to declare.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1. Approval is sought for expenditure across two financial years. to deliver projects covered in intervention strand three (set out in MD3382). This spend is broken down in the table below:

	2025-26	2026-27
Expenditure against projects	£0	£200,000
Staff costs in the Infrastructure Coordination Service	£47,242	£47,241

- 5.2. The income will be received in line with the expenditure, claimed in arrears. This income is broken down in the table below:

	2025-26	2026-27
Regulator's Pioneer Fund	£23,621	£270,862

- 5.3. Funding is expected to run until September/October 2026. No activities will extend into 2027-28. All appropriate budget adjustments will be made.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1. The foregoing sections of this report indicate that the decisions requested of the Assistant Director of Connectivity, Air Quality, Transport and Infrastructure concern the exercise of the GLA's general powers, falling within the GLA's statutory powers to do such things considered to further, or that are facilitative of, or conducive or incidental to, the promotion of economic development and wealth creation, social development, and the improvement of the environment in Greater London. In formulating the proposals in respect of which a decision is sought, officers have complied with the GLA'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 UK
 - consult with appropriate bodies.
- 6.2. In taking this decision, the Assistant Director of Connectivity, Air Quality, Transport and Infrastructure should have due regard to the PSED under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 – namely, the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act; and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not. This requirement is addressed at section 3, above.
- 6.3. The Memorandum of Understanding governing the funding arrangements is not legally binding. Funding is conditional upon compliance with its terms, and no expenditure should be committed unless and until funding has been confirmed or sufficient approved budget provision is in place to cover any expenditure in advance of reimbursement.
- 6.4. Any procurement required to deliver the approved feasibility study, pilot or related activities must be conducted in compliance with the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code and applicable public procurement requirements.
- 6.5. Any grant funding received must comply with all applicable legal requirements, including (where relevant) the Subsidy Control Act 2022.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

- 7.1. The project will be delivered according to the following timetable:

Activity	Timeline
MoU and work start	October 2025
Feasibility study	January 2026
Pilot using abandoned assets in London	June 2026
Finalising the project	September 2026

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:

Simona Webb 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 2 February 2026.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, FINANCIAL SERVICES:

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

Signature



Date

2 February 2026