

DD DECISION – CD11

Title: West London Orbital 2026-28 contributions

Executive summary

This decision is seeking approval for OPDC's contribution towards the next phase of design and engineering works for the West London Orbital (WLO) transport scheme. Approval for £394,263.61 of expenditure is being sought which represents 5.93% of the overall costs for the next phase of work totalling £6,650,000, with the remainder being made up by contributions from TfL (50%), and the other west London Boroughs (44.07%). The next phase of works will focus on the preparation of the preferred option selection, concept design and outline business case development for the scheme.

Decision

That the Chief Executive Officer approves:

- i. Expenditure of £394,263.61 of Planning Directorate funding from the 2026/27 budget towards the West London Orbital (WLO) transport scheme.

Chief Executive Officer

I do not have any disclosable interest in the proposed Decision. It is consistent with OPDC's priorities and has my approval.

Signature:



Matt Carpen

Date: 24/02/2026

PART 1: NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

1. Background and context

- 1.1 The West London Orbital (WLO) is a strategic west-London transport scheme proposed by Transport for London (TfL) in West London which would deliver a new passenger railway line between Hounslow and Barnet. The route would utilise existing rail lines, some of which already operate passenger services and some of which are currently solely used for rail freight. Upgrades are required to the lines and signalling to run modern passenger services, new and enhanced rail stations are needed and there are other targeting infrastructure upgrades including new crossings and bridges.
- 1.2 Over the past few years, feasibility work has been ongoing to look into the constructability, cost, funding and financing and cost benefits for the scheme. The scheme is now ready to move into the next phase of work, which would see the scheme developed further to identify a final preferred option which would then be submitted for approval through a Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO) before entering project delivery phases.

2. The proposal and how it will be delivered

- 2.1 This stage of study work comprises the identification and selection of a preferred design, outline business case development and concept design phase completion ready for the submission of a Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO), which would comprise a subsequent phase of work.
- 2.2 This phase of study work is projected to cost £6,650,000. TfL will fund 50% of the costs with the remainder being made up by contributions from OPDC and other west London Boroughs through which the WLO route will pass. All boroughs have now given approval in principle their contributions and are securing financial sign off. OPDC's contribution of £394,000 represents approximately 5.93% of the overall costs for the next stage of works.
- 2.3 OPDC's contribution would be formalised through a grant funding agreement with TfL, and the required budget provision for this contribution is already included in the approved 2026-27 OPDC budget.
- 2.4 TfL will manage all contracts and consultancy appointments for the next stage of works, with consultancy support procured in accordance with TfL's procurement procedures and framework.

3. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 3.1 The next stage of scheme development will identify a preferred option for delivery of the WLO scheme. This stage will produce a suit of documents and studies that would form the technical basis for a future application for approval of the scheme through a WLO.
- 3.2 The next stage of work is therefore critical in the progression of the WLO scheme towards delivery.

4. Strategic fit

- 4.1 The WLO scheme is identified as a priority in the Mayor's London Plan and Transport Strategy and OPDC's Local Plan also recognises the importance of safeguarding the route to support the WLO scheme's delivery.
- 4.2 This stage of work will progress the WLO scheme to the point at which the technical outputs could support the development of a future TWAO application. Subject to additional funding and approvals, subsequent stages would then move the WLO scheme towards delivery.

5. Project governance and assurance

- 5.1 TfL will act as client for this stage of work, with ongoing involvement from OPDC and other affected west London Boroughs (Hounslow, Ealing, Brent and Harrow) throughout delivery through a Partners Oversight Group comprising senior officers and a Partners Working Group comprising technical officers. Both the Partners Oversight Group and Partners Working Group have Terms of Reference which have been agreed by OPDC and the other affected west London Boroughs. OPDC is a member of both groups.
- 5.2 External consultancy services will be procured via a competitive procurement process using TfL's procurement procedures and frameworks. Consultancy services are required for the following topics. The below list is not exhaustive and may change.
 - Strategic Growth Study interim reports, interactive online mapping, and a final report that articulates the public intervention needed to deliver the vision with the Project as a catalyst including public investment and supportive policy frameworks
 - Funding Strategy report and accompanying funding model spreadsheets produced by the funding advisory supplier
 - Economic assessment report and accompanying spreadsheet model in a format allowing interrogation and testing of assumptions
 - Option Selection Case version of the business case
 - Model enhancement report setting out the technical improvements made to the robustness of the Railplan model for forecasting the impacts of the Project
 - Validation report setting out an improved representation of orbital public transport demand in the Railplan model
 - Revenue methodology report setting out an enhanced approach for assessing the impacts of the Project on revenue including consideration of fares options
 - Model outputs presented in suitable formats to allow the easy interpretation of impacts
 - Model outputs in the required format to inform the assessment of the economic impacts of the Project as part of Workstream C
 - Technical notes and a timetable assessment report produced by Network Rail, and timetable outputs in a suitable format to be used as an input to performance modelling
 - Performance modelling report and associated outputs

- 1:200 scale topographical surveys of key areas of the Project's route and an accompanying Technical Survey Report
- Assessments of existing infrastructure (e.g. signalling equipment) to determine the ability to meet the Project's requirements
- Updated Fleet Strategy fully integrated with electrification options
- Assessment of structures (e.g. buried culverts) to ensure compliance with standards and the Project's requirements
- Option Selection Reports for all elements of the Project infrastructure
- Royal Institution of British Architects (RIBA) Stage 2 reports for each new station and each existing station requiring major enhancements
- Pedestrian modelling assessments of stations where congestion issues may arise
- Line speed assessments of sections of sections of the Project's route that are currently freight only to inform the delivery of faster journey times
- Impact assessments covering environmental matters including biodiversity, climate adaptation and sustainability
- All PACE 1 Event Stage 3 deliverables required for review as part of Network Rail's assurance
- Updated Estimated Final Cost of the Project in TfL's standard format
- Delivery model Option Assessment Report

5.3 All resulting contracts would be managed by a designated TfL officer lead.

5.4 TfL will maintain four-weekly records of expenditure which will be shared with OPDC and the other affected west London boroughs. These will be sent to OPDC's Chief Operating Officer/Chief Finance Officer and Director of Planning. Payments will be made quarterly on an arrears basis but OPDC's contributions will be front-loaded to fall wholly within the 2026-27 financial year, for which OPDC has approved budget.

6. Risk, Issues and Opportunities

Table 1: Potential Risks and Mitigations

Risk description	Inherent score	Mitigations	Target score
Project Delays	Likelihood:4 Impact: 5 Total: 20	TfL have full-time sponsors and project managers dedicated to the WLO project to ensure its timely delivery. Partners Oversight Group and Partners Working Group would be engaged throughout and kept abreast of any risk of programme delays. Decisions can then be made at the Partners Oversight Group whether delays are tolerable.	Likelihood: 3 Impact:3 Total: 9

Increased Cost	Likelihood:4 Impact: 5 Total: 20	Competitive procurement process. Detailed briefs, which set out all the costs the consultants should price for. TfL will maintain four-weekly records of expenditure which will be shared. Partners Oversight Group and Partners Working Group would be kept informed of any potential cost increase and decisions made at Partners Oversight Group.	Likelihood:3 Impact: 4 Total: 12
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7. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Comments

- 7.1 Under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, as a public authority, OPDC must 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.
- 7.2 The protected characteristics and groups are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, gender, religion or belief, sexual orientation and marriage/ civil partnership status. Fulfilling this duty involves having due regard to: the need to remove or minimise any disadvantage suffered by those who share a protected characteristic or one that is connected to that characteristic; taking steps to meet the different needs of such people; and encouraging them to participate in public life or in any other activity where their participation is disproportionately low. Compliance with the Equality Act may involve treating people with a protected characteristic more favourably than those without the characteristic. The duty must be exercised with an open mind and at the time a Decision is taken in the exercise of the OPDC's functions.
- 7.3 Consultancy services will be selected via a competitive process and following evaluation against set criteria, including their approach to equity, diversity and inclusion.
- 7.4 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken for the project as a whole which will continue to be developed as the project progresses.

8. Social Value

- 8.1 OPDC will work with TfL to ensure that any briefs for studies require that each tender submission should set out clearly the social value benefit that each

proposed consultant team would offer. This should not only consider the social value that would come from the technical work the consultant team would carry out but also additional, short-term social value offerings to the west London community. Social Value commitments would be discussed and confirmed in coordination with the west London boroughs at the Partners Oversight Group and Partners Working Group as appropriate.

9. Other considerations

9.1 None applicable.

10. Conflicts of interest

10.1 No one involved in the preparation or clearance of this Form, or its substantive proposal, has any conflict of interest.

11. Financial comments

11.1 The contribution of £394,263.61 represents additional funding provided directly through the Greater London Assembly Mayoral Budget 2026/27. This allocation has been made to the OPDC to support further development of WLO.

11.2 OPDC's contribution will be paid in 2026/27 but covers activities and delivery timeline across the two financial years 2026/27 and 2027/28. Payments would be made in instalments on an arrears basis.

11.3 Any further expenditure is subject to the Corporation's decision-making process.

12. Legal comments

12.1 The foregoing sections of this report indicate that the decisions requested of the Director of Planning 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 the improvement of the environment 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; and consult with appropriate bodies.
- In taking the decisions requested, the Director of Planning 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 Director of Planning should have particular regard to section 7 (above) of this report.

12.2 OPDC has had regard to the requirements of the Subsidy Control Act 2022 in relation to the proposed grant funding, and officers consider that the funding is compliant with those requirements.

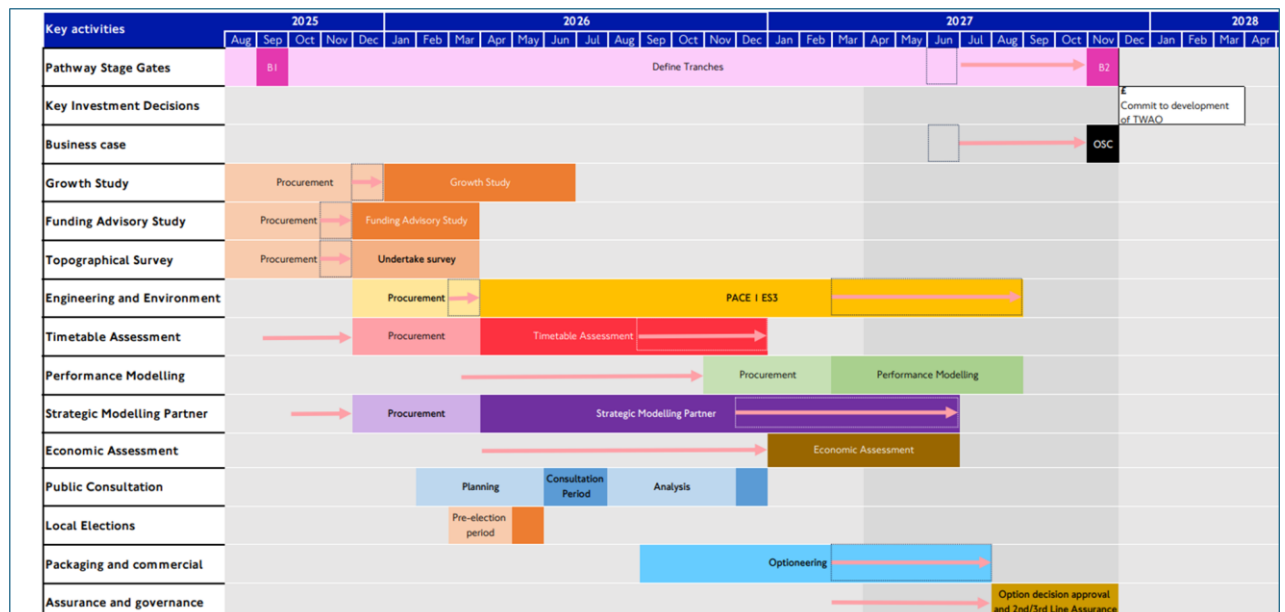
12.3 The proposed grant funding is within OPDC’s general powers, as it supports activities that are considered conducive to, or in furtherance of, OPDC’s statutory objectives and functions. The funding will be formalised through a grant funding agreement between OPDC and TfL, which will set out the terms of the funding, reporting requirements, and any conditions attached to the grant. Appropriate legal documentation must be completed and executed by both parties before any grant funding is released.

12.4 As TfL will be responsible for procuring and managing all consultancy services required for this stage of work, OPDC will not be procuring works, services or supplies under this decision. TfL will undertake all procurement activity in accordance with its own statutory obligations and procurement governance.

13. Summary timeline

Table 2: Summary of Timeframes.

Activity	Date
Single option selection	Spring – autumn 2026
Public consultation	Summer 2026
Concept Design	Winter 2027 – winter 2028
Outline Business Case	Autumn 2028



Appendices

- Appendix A – Drafting Funding Agreement

Other supporting papers

- None

PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Information in this Form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA). OPDC aims to publish the Form within three working day of approval.

If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the Decision (for example, impacting a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date (when it will be published). Deferral periods are kept to the shortest length strictly necessary.

Part 1 – Deferral

Publication of this Part 1 is to be deferred: **No**

The deferral is until: **N/A**

This is because: **N/A**

Part 2 – Confidential information

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under FoIA should be included in or attached to any separate Part 2 Form, together with the rationale for withholding the information at this time.

There is a separate and confidential Part 2 Form: **No**

DECLARATIONS

Drafting officer

Tom Cardis, Head of Planning Policy has drafted this Form in accordance with OPDC procedures, including for handling conflicts of interests, and confirm that:

Advice: The Governance, Finance and Legal teams have commented on the proposal.



CONFIRMATIONS

Section 106 funding

This use of S106 to fund the expenditure proposal was approved via a Section 106 spend proposal form on N/A

Review

This Decision was circulated for Senior Review on Tuesday 17 February 2026.

Chief Finance Officer: Philip Hall, Head of Finance, in absence of CFO.

Financial implications have been appropriately considered in the preparation of this form.



Signature: pp CFO

Date: 18/02/2026

Head of Governance: Martin Harrison

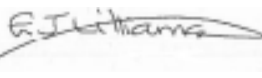
Governance implications have been appropriately considered in the preparation of this form.

Signature: 

Date: 17/02/2026

Director Emma Williamson, Director of Planning

I do not have any disclosable interest in the proposed Decision. It is consistent with OPDC's priorities and can be referred to the CEO for final approval.

Signature: 

Date: 20/02/2026