

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR MAYORAL DECISION – MD3286

Title: London New Year's Eve Celebrations 2024: Outside the event footprint

Executive summary:

Public safety at events is paramount. MD3009 and MD3172 confirmed plans for the delivery of London New Year's Eve (NYE) celebrations in 2024.

NYE takes place in central London where significant numbers of people may be present for other NYE celebrations and therefore the safety of the wider footprint must be considered.

Following last year's celebrations, work with partners has identified that for 2024-25, additional budget of up to £1,103,520 is required to enhance safety and security outside of the event footprint, as NYE in Central London requires multi-agency management across the central London area. As event organiser and London's strategic authority, the GLA must play a leading role in this.

To help fund increased costs and ensure the GLA meets the new safety obligations under the proposed 'Martyn's Law' legislation changes to ticket prices are required, based on viewing area. A discount for Londoners is proposed, meaning that they will be able to watch the event from some viewing areas for the same cost as last year.

The total cost of the event is within the provision and reserves made in the 2024-25 GLA: Mayor budget.

Decision:

That the Mayor approves:

- further GLA net expenditure of up to £1,103,520, in addition to that already approved under cover of MD3009 and MD3172, to meet costs of delivering the 2024 NYE event, ensuring safety outside of the event is maintained
- the use of surplus funding available from the UEFA Champions League Final 2024 budget to bridge the funding gap of up to £723,853
- event ticket prices being set at between £35 and £50, dependent on zone, with a £15 discount available for Londoners, to help cover the increased security and safety costs.

Mayor of London

I confirm that I do not have any disclosable pecuniary interests in the proposed decision and take the decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct for elected Members of the Authority.

The above request has my approval.

Signature:



Date:

11/9/24

PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE TO THE MAYOR

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. This Mayoral Decision (MD) is an update to MD3009 and MD3172 with regards to the delivery of London's New Year's Eve (NYE) celebrations in 2024. It seeks the Mayor's approval for additional funding of up to £1,103,520 to meet additional costs for the 2024 event to enhance safety and security outside of the event footprint ('Zone-Ex'), responding to 2023 lessons learned and multi-agency feedback.
- 1.2. In the wake of inquiries into terrorist attacks in public spaces across the UK – most notably the Manchester Arena bombing – and ahead of the proposed legislation in response to this, expectations and requirements imposed by local authorities has also increased. The purpose of proposed legislation (known colloquially as 'Martyn's Law' and previously referred to as the Protect Duty) is to improve safety and security in public spaces. While some changes have already been implemented, there is increased demand for safer crowd management within the 'grey space' or 'Zone-Ex' outside the event periphery. This is resulting in increased security and infrastructure costs.
- 1.3. Zone-Ex (External Zone) is expressed, by the Purple Guide to Health, Safety and Welfare at Outdoor Events, as *"an area within the public realm, between an event perimeter and ports of entry/exit, that is activated as event attendees, transiting as pedestrians arriving or departing the event, form a crowd, which may require crowd management resources to manage safety risks"*.
- 1.4. The Zone-Ex areas have also experienced further challenges, in part due to a shift in public behaviour. Since the pandemic, people appear to have become less compliant, or less aware, in their engagement with mass-public events; and there seems to be an expectation that people can just turn up, or get access. Demonstration of this behaviour at both the 2022 and 2023 NYE events were seen through significant crowd management challenges from non-ticketholders and an increase of barrier breaches causing safety issues.
- 1.5. The primary focus for planning NYE is to continue building resilience into the plans to account for the much bigger non-ticketed crowds outside the event footprint and manage the shift in crowd behaviour; and to develop plans and enhanced partnership working within Zone-Ex.
- 1.6. Following the debriefing process for the 2023 NYE event, several key risks and issues were identified. These include:
 - overcrowding outside event footprint and entrance gates (i.e in Zone-Ex areas), causing risk to safety of staff, ticketholders and non-ticketholders through crushing; impeding emergency services access; and creating risks of falling from height (from bridges/street furniture)
 - breach of barrier lines, causing risk to safety of staff, ticket and non-ticketholders through possible overcrowding in event footprint, and injury from falling infrastructure and crushing
- 1.7. Security and stewarding provision needs to be increased specifically throughout the Zone-Ex areas.
- 1.8. There needs to be increased use of more robust infrastructure across the event perimeter to reduce the risk of barrier breaches, to ensure clear and safe routes can be maintained into the event.
- 1.9. Other stakeholders' operations on NYE can significantly impact our ability to deliver the NYE plan – resulting in increased costs to facilitate or work around these. A review of our partnership working will look to encourage greater collaboration and clarity on roles and responsibilities, specifically in Zone-Ex areas. As part of this work, it is possible that some Zone-Ex costs may be met by other partners, reducing the GLA expenditure on the event.

Ticket price

- 1.10. Under MD3009, there was a broad delegation that also noted approval of charges. This was in relation to agreeing the ticket price, in consultation with the Mayor's Office, throughout the duration of that MD. It was expected that a £20 ticket price would again be set.
- 1.11. Given the increase in costs, it is felt necessary to increase ticket prices and introduce different prices by viewing area.
- 1.12. This has been considered in the context of the average spend of ticketholders, most of whom are visitors to the city. It is considered necessary so that attendees make a fair contribution to the costs of their admission and safety. The GLA will not make a profit from this ticket increase – it will solely support covering some of the increased costs.
- 1.13. This approach allows a higher price to be charged (£50) for the prime viewing area – on the Embankment, Westminster and Waterloo Bridges, directly in front of and around the show at the London Eye. Tickets for these viewing areas are usually the first to be sold, and therefore are in the greatest demand.
- 1.14. It is proposed that a price uplift to £35 across the other viewing areas is also implemented, to help offset some of the increased costs.
- 1.15. To help maintain an affordable offer to Londoners, it is also proposed to offer a discount of £15 in each of the respective ticket price zones for ticket purchasers with a London postcode. Therefore, a ticket price for Londoners at £20, or £35, in the non-prime and prime viewing areas respectively. Londoners will be verified at the purchase stage, with the card used for booking needing to be registered at a London address. This means that Londoners will be able to watch the event from some viewing areas for the same cost as last year.
- 1.16. The following table outlines the proposed ticket pricing and anticipated income that this will generate to offset some of the event delivery costs.
- 1.17. The table is based on an assumption of 30 per cent of ticket holders having a London postcode – which is consistent with ticket sales at previous NYE events. This 30 per cent of total ticket holders is split equally across each price zone, however, the actual income generated will be variable depending on the actual number of sales to Londoners.

	Ticket price (incl. VAT)	Anticipated number of tickets sold*	Anticipated income (excl. VAT)
Prime viewing areas (Embankment, Westminster & Waterloo Bridges)	£50	37,360	£1,566,667
Londoners discounted rate – Prime viewing areas	£35	12,100	£352,917
Non-prime viewing areas (all other areas)	£35	19,110	£557,375
Londoners discounted rate – Non-prime viewing areas	£20	12,101	£201,683
Total	Variable	80,671	*£2,678,642

*Estimated ticket sales in each area dependent on number of tickets sold to Londoners.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1. The key objectives for the NYE celebrations are to:

- galvanise Londoners behind a core values statement, which generates optimism and positive public support for London as a centre of progression and equality during the current national economic and social challenges
 - promote London nationally and internationally as a global city, strengthening its reputation across the UK and overseas, and raising confidence to visit, study and do business in London, thereby supporting economic recovery
 - generate economic benefit to London through visitor spend
 - support London's emergency services with a planned and managed focal point for NYE.
- 2.2. Attainment of the above objectives are monitored and measured through: pre- and post-event market research; levels and analysis of local, national and international media coverage; and digital traffic and click-through rates on the GLA website and social channels.
- 2.3. In 2021, a report by professional services firm Hatch revealed that major events contribute over £600m on average to the capital's economy every year. The report also found that these events can be a huge catalyst towards London's recovery from the pandemic with every visitor to a concert and cultural event generating, on average, £23 to the London economy.
- 2.4. London's NYE celebration is a significant driver of domestic and international visits to London over Christmas and the New Year. Usually, around 70 per cent of ticketholders attending the event are from outside London. Data from the GLA's previous NYE events indicates that these visitors spend, on average, £138.75 in the city, generating over £14m of additional revenue for London's businesses and economy. This indicates a return on investment of nearly £3 for every £1 spent, generated from ticketholders alone.
- 2.5. By providing a planned and managed major event in London on NYE, which is a focal point for celebrations, we support the emergency services in keeping visitors to central London safe on NYE. Unplanned and spontaneous mass-gatherings, which are at risk of occurring without any event focus, increase risk to public safety and put additional pressures on our emergency services, at a time when resources are already stretched on one of the busiest nights of the year.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, as a public authority, the Mayor of London must have 'due regard' of the need to:
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
 - advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 3.2. The "protected characteristics" are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage/civil partnership status. The duty involves having appropriate regard to these matters as they apply in the circumstances, including having regard to the need to: remove or minimise any disadvantage suffered by those who share or are connected to a protected characteristic; take steps to meet the diverse needs of such people; and encourage them to participate in public life or in any other activity where their participation is disproportionately low. This can involve treating people with a protected characteristic more favourably than those without one.
- 3.3. The NYE event is aimed at bringing people from different communities together, celebrating London's diversity and helping to foster good relations between communities. This is achieved through the creative show, which will highlight and celebrate London's diversity; and through a broad and targeted approach to marketing channels, encouraging people from different communities to attend.

- 3.4. The contract ensures diversity and representation are embedded throughout the project delivery, and within the creative options for the show.
- 3.5. Recommendations from an access assessment will be incorporated into the event planning, with minimum provision including a dedicated viewing area for people with disabilities and mobility issues; and the provision of a support line in the lead-up to the event to discuss access requirements.
- 3.6. The event will be accessible to all via national media coverage, and live broadcast on national and international television. Subtitles and audio-descriptive support will be available throughout the broadcast.
- 3.7. Tickets are set at the lowest possible price point for Londoners in order to maintain affordability and accessibility for public attendance at the event, whilst broadly offsetting the cost of ticket implementation.

4. Other considerations

Key risks and issues

- 4.1. General risks associated with this event and proposed mitigation were set out in MD3009 and MD3172. The specific risk with not incurring the extra expenditure set out in this decision was to public safety. Following debriefs from the 2023 event, specific crowd management and operational risks were identified.
- 4.2. The table below shows these additional risks and the mitigations that this additional funding would enable:

Risk	Mitigation	RAG with mitigations implemented
Overcrowding outside event footprint (Zone-Ex) and entrance gates, causing risk to safety of staff, ticket and non-ticketholders through crushing; impeding emergency services access; and creating risks of falling from height (e.g., bridges/street furniture).	Enhanced stewarding; enhanced infrastructure; enhanced partnership working, encouraging partners to adapt their plans to support wider London operations and ensure clarity on roles and responsibilities in Zone-Ex; reduce numbers of ticketholders to create contingency safe-space; review the ticketing strategy; and obtain partner support to tackle fake-ticket sales.	Amber
Breach of barrier lines, causing risk to safety of staff, ticket and non-ticketholders through possible overcrowding in event footprint and injury from falling infrastructure and crushing.	Review potential risk areas and support with more robust infrastructure and stewarding provision; and ensure clarity on roles and responsibilities in Zone-Ex, to ensure plans can be enforced.	Amber
Ticketholders not gaining access to the event, causing both reputational and financial risk to the GLA/the Mayor of London.	Ensure infrastructure installed earlier, with the support of earlier road closures; extension of stewards' shifts; increased partnership working and collaboration; and improved ticketholder and non-ticketholder comms.	Green
Inadequate communications to ticket and non-ticketholders on the ground as well as conflicting messaging from partner agencies, contributing to crowding issues and poor customer experience.	Reviewed and improved ticketholder and non-ticketholder comms; increased partnership working and collaboration; and improved briefings to stewards and on-the-ground staff.	Green

Lack/limited engagement from stakeholders (local authorities, agencies, B&R), at key points in the Zone Ex areas planning process, causing late changes in the event plan resulting in confusion in event delivery.	A redesigned partnership working plan to ensure wider stakeholder and partner engagement; earlier stakeholder engagement; development of a Zone-Ex plan, providing clarity on roles and responsibilities of stakeholders; and greater link-up on command, control and comms with other partners (the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), local authorities, landowners and stewards) on management, and enforcement, of Zone-Ex to limit overcrowding.	Amber
Ticket income target not achieved due to the higher ticket prices resulting in not all tickets being sold and the uncertainty of the number of discounted tickets taken up by Londoners.	The estimated figure for discounted tickets is based on 30 per cent of the tickets going to Londoners. This is realistic and was based on historical ticket sale information.	Amber

Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

4.3. In approving additional budget for the delivery of London's NYE event, this links to the following Mayoral strategies and priorities:

- Backing London's world-leading cultural and creative sector
- Growing London's economy
- London for Everyone
- All of Us – Strategy for Social Integration: using sport, volunteering, arts and culture as powerful tools for social integration; and establishing London's reputation as a welcoming city for newcomers from other parts of the UK and abroad, with opportunities to feel a strong connection and positive sense of belonging to the city in which they are living.
- Cultural strategy: the Mayor will continue to fund festivals and events with an emphasis on more community involvement, increasing quality, raising London's profile, and increasing volunteering.
- Inclusive London – the Mayor's equality, diversity and inclusion strategy: celebrating London's rich diversity; and bringing communities together through a series of high-profile, accessible and inclusive events and campaigns.

Consultation and impact assessment

- 4.4. Extensive consultation is taking place with all operational agencies including, but not limited to, the MPS, Transport for London, the British Transport Police, the London Ambulance Service, London Fire Brigade, Westminster City Council, the City of London Corporation, the Royal Parks, the London Borough of Lambeth, the London Borough of Southwark and other London boroughs affected. From discussions to date, they will welcome the additional funding providing through this decision.
- 4.5. Consultation is also being carried out by the event production company as part of their delivery role with residents and businesses affected by the event. The outcome of all such consultation will be factored into the delivery of the event as appropriate.

Conflicts of interest

- 4.6. There are no known conflicts of interest in relation to those involved in the drafting or clearance of this decision form, or those involved in the delivery of the project.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1. Mayoral approval is sought to increase GLA expenditure by up to £1,103,520 for the delivery of London New Year's Eve (NYE) celebrations in 2024. This will be funded from the Events for London budget and underspends from the UEFA Champions League Final 2024 budget.
- 5.2. Approval is also requested to set a tiered ticket price ranging from £20 to £50 to mitigate the increased costs for security and stewarding. Current projections for the ticketing income are c£2.679m based on 30 per cent anticipated sale of discounted tickets to Londoners across viewing areas.
- 5.3. GLA expenditure of up to £4.972m is proposed to be spent on the event in 2024. The current year allocated budget is £4.248m. Additional funding of £0.724m will be met from underspends in the UEFA Champions League Final 2024 budget.
- 5.4. The anticipated breakdown is as per below:

2024 Budget	
Expenditure	Amount
Production (event management, creative, infrastructure, crowd management, stewarding and security)	£7,501,495
Internal operational costs (Traffic Management Orders, ticket agency fees, Trafalgar Square costs)	£180,000
Marketing	£44,000
Expenditure total	£7,725,495
Income	
Agreed GLA budget via MD3009	£3,000,000
Agreed GLA budget via MD3172	£868,333
Expected ticket income (less VAT)	£2,678,642
Expected concession income	£25,000
Expected sponsorship income	£50,000
Income total	£6,621,975
Income shortfall requested within this MD	£1,103,520
Net GLA expenditure 2024	£4,971,853

- 5.5. In order for the GLA to be satisfied with event suppliers or any future event organiser's capacity and financial status to successfully deliver the events, contracts will be subject to satisfactory due diligence; checks on an annual basis; and mitigations included in the contracts to protect the GLA's financial commitment in the event.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1. The foregoing sections of this report indicate that the decisions requested of the Mayor fall within the statutory powers of the GLA to promote and/or to do anything that is facilitative of, or conducive or incidental to, social development and economic development and wealth creation within Greater London.
- 6.2. 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 United Kingdom
- consult with appropriate bodies.

- 6.3. These decisions also fall within the statutory powers of the GLA under section 378 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 (the Act), to do anything for the purposes of encouraging people to visit Greater London, and encouraging people from outside the United Kingdom to visit the United Kingdom via Greater London. As set out in section 2 above the NYE event serves to promote London nationally and internationally as a destination to visit. The expenditure and increased ticket pricing proposed may be considered as facilitative of delivery of the event, and so falls within the exercise of that power. In addition, however, it should be noted that under section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003, the GLA can charge for discretionary services, provided that, taking one financial year with another, the income from the charges do not exceed the costs associated with the provision of the services in question.
- 6.4. In taking the decisions requested of him, the Mayor 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; advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (race, disability, gender reassignment, age, sex, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and pregnancy and maternity) 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 Mayor should have particular regard to section three (above) of this report.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

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

Activity	Timeline
Public announcement	October 2024
Ticket sales	October 2024 (and December 2024)
Delivery end date	1 January 2025
NYE 2024 project closure	28 February 2025

Appendices and supporting papers:

- MD3009
- MD3172

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? YES

If YES, for what reason: To ensure that commercial confidentiality is not compromised during supplier negotiations ahead of next year’s event.

Until what date: (a date is required if deferring) 01 April 2025

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:

Kim Hobbs has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Sponsoring Director:

Niran Mothada has reviewed the request and is satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor’s plans and priorities.

✓

Mayoral Adviser:

David Bellamy has been consulted about the proposal and agrees the recommendations.

✓

Advice:

The Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal.

✓

Mayoral Delivery Board

This decision was agreed by the Mayoral Delivery Board on 9 September 2024.

✓

INTERIM CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER:

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

Signature:

[Handwritten Signature]

Date

10/09/2024

CHIEF OF STAFF:

I am satisfied that this is an appropriate request to be submitted to the Mayor.

Signature:

[Handwritten Signature]

Date:

10/09/2024

