

ADHS DECISION – 23

Title: Extension of communications secondment

Executive summary

A part-time communications secondment was approved under [DD010](#) for 2025–26 to provide additional capacity while the Director of Communications, Engagement and Strategy was on maternity leave, and was extended for a further three months in January 2026 during their return period.

Given the intensive workload associated with launching OPDC’s procurement for a delivery partner, there remains a need for skilled additional resource from April to the end of June 2026. OPDC therefore proposes extending the part-time secondment for two days per week.

This will ensure the communications function is adequately resourced to manage OPDC’s reputation and relationships with media, partners, stakeholders and local communities until the team’s workload returns to a more typical level.

Decision

That the Head of Communications and Engagement approves:

- i. Expenditure of up to £31,500 on the continuation of a part-time specialist communications manager secondment to support the Communications and Engagement team.
- ii. A three-month extension of the existing secondment arrangement, for the period April to June 2026, to be delivered by LCA.

Head of Communications and Engagement

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

Signature: 

Date: 04/06/26

PART 1: NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

1. Background and context

- 1.1 The Communications and Engagement team sits within the Chief Executive's Office within OPDC. It is led by the Director of Communications, Engagement and Strategy who is part of the organisation's Executive Team.
- 1.2 The Director of Communications, Engagement and Strategy went on maternity leave in January 2025, with the Head of Communications and Engagement stepping into the Interim role until December 2025.
- 1.3 To address an immediate need to rapidly bolster skilled resource, a temporary secondment was arranged to deliver significant communications priorities, including communications around the Old Oak illustrative masterplan and early preparations for the launch of procurement for a delivery partner, which required intensive communications support.
- 1.4 The initial period of the secondment (decision notice [DD010](#)) ran from 2 June to 31 December 2025. The secondment was then extended for three months from January to the end of March 2026.
- 1.5 With delivery partner procurement launched in May 2026, a further three-month extension of the secondment is sought to cover the intensive period of communications activity around the launch and immediately following.
- 1.6 This funding will provide:
 - A skilled experienced communications resource on a secondment basis for an average of two days per week until the end of June 2026.
 - Two days per week equates to 8.67 days per month for a monthly fee of £10,500, including a 5% disbursement allowance. This will require £31,500 budget over the three-month extension period.
 - The secondee will develop comprehensive communications materials aligned with OPDC's vision, goals and values; organise events and launches; handle media relations; and support OPDC's presence at industry events.
 - They will play a vital role in planning and delivering communications in the lead up to and following procurement launch, maximising positive profile opportunities for OPDC and the Old Oak scheme.
 - **Decision history:** the setting up of the initial secondment term was agreed through [DD10](#).

2. The proposal and how it will be delivered

- 2.1 To address an exceptionally busy period for the communications and engagement team, OPDC is seeking to extend a part-time secondment for an additional three months to cover the launch of delivery partner procurement and the period immediately following this.

2.2 Examples of the kinds of work the secondee will perform include:

- Drafting and implementing communications plans aligned with OPDC's vision, goals and values.
- Drafting media releases, media statements and Q&A / FAQs.
- Support with organising events and launches, contributing to the thinking around themes, planning logistics and guest lists, and preparing invitations.
- Drafting and reviewing publicity materials, including posters, internal and external newsletters and exhibition display boards.
- Supporting OPDC's presence at industry events – including finding and booking speaker opportunities and drafting briefings for attendees.
- Planning and delivering communications around the forthcoming procurement of a delivery partner, working closely with communications and engagement colleagues and with OPDC's delivery team to maximise positive profile opportunities in the lead up to and following launch.

2.3 The above work priorities require skilled resource knowledgeable in communications to support major regeneration projects and with a track record of working with public authorities. The spend will ensure the in-house team has sufficient communications resource to support the rapid progress being made with OPDC's delivery programme - ensuring stakeholder, community and industry audiences are kept up to date.

2.4 Support via a secondment from LCA is proposed to provide continuity through extending the work of an existing secondee with an established knowledge of OPDC's priorities and programme. This approach also reflects the short-term and time limited nature of the requirement and avoids disproportionate time and costs associated with lengthy recruitment processes and notice periods, in recognition that the resource need is temporary.

3. Objectives and expected outcomes

3.1 Effective handling of key milestones to the benefit of OPDC's reputation and demonstrating the organisation's capability to deliver, including (but are not limited to):

- Launch of procurement for a delivery partner.
- UKREiiF (19-21 May), one of the major UK property events of the year.
- Profiling opportunities for the OPDC senior team.

3.2 Support for development of communications strategies and plans for Old Oak and delivery partner procurement will be the core focus ensuring a well-planned approach to stakeholder, community and media communications.

3.3 It is estimated that an average of two days per week will be required to fulfil these support needs, with one dedicated day spent at OPDC's offices and an additional full day equivalent working remotely. This additional time may be spread across several weekdays depending on project priorities.

4. Strategic fit

- 4.1 By providing additional skilled resource within the team, the secondment is providing the capacity to deliver on OPDC's values as set out in its Corporate Strategy - ambition, collaboration, stewardship, inclusivity, curiosity and integrity.
- 4.2 It builds capacity for the communications and engagement team to collaborate with communities; to communicate the ambition of Old Oak as an exemplar new place; to champion the rich diversity of the Old Oak and Park Royal area (and London and West London) in the organisation's communications; to continually learn from others' experiences; to take stewardship of the area; and to act on verbal commitments.
- 4.3 The secondment links with OPDC's four pillars, set out below, particularly delivery (supporting the organisation during a pivotal year which will shape a vision for Old Oak and seek a partner or partners to work with OPDC to deliver this) and community (ensuring the vision and OPDC's wider activities understand and reflect local needs and aspirations).

- **OPDC Pillars:**

- *Delivery – Realising ambition through action.*
- *Community – A place for everyone, reflecting local needs and aspirations.*
- *Innovation – Creating a sustainable and prosperous future.*
- *Core Functions – An efficient and equitable team, fit for the future.*

- 4.4 With a London Growth Plan published by the Mayor of London in 2025 and Towards a New London Plan setting the direction of travel for London's next strategic blueprint, it is vital that OPDC communicates the progress it is making in delivering the capital's potential for new growth, homes, and opportunity.

5. Project governance and assurance

- 5.1 The secondee will be managed by the Head of Communications and Engagement who will be responsible for monitoring the budget, performance and outputs. The secondee will work closely alongside the Communications and External Relations Manager and the Digital Communications Manager. They will work for OPDC for two days per week until the end of June 2026.

6. Risk, Issues and Opportunities

- 6.1 Risk - utilising of external rather than in-house resource could risk diluting communication of the vision, mission and values of OPDC.

Mitigation - ensure secondee continues to develop their strong understanding of OPDC's corporate strategy and values and the communities which make up the OPDC area. This will be achieved through ongoing support from the wider communications team on message and strategy development.

- 6.2 Opportunity - the increased resource will support communications that are well-planned and executed, ensuring those with an interest in OPDC's activities are kept well-informed and closely involved.

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 Good communications and engagement play vital roles in achieving the objectives of OPDC's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and the Mayor of London's strategic objectives for EDI. Greater resource will improve the capacity of the OPDC team to keep all local communities and stakeholders regularly updated on OPDC's activities. It will support a planned, strategic approach to communications that celebrates the rich diversity of the OPDC area and takes a tailored approach to reach all audiences including 'seldom heard' groups.

8. Social Value and Environment

- 8.1 OPDC's approach to social value delivery is made up of a series of "priority themes" that articulate its ambitions and OPDC is a signatory to the GLA Group's Responsible Procurement Plan.
- 8.2 The part-time secondment will help to deliver against OPDC's priority themes by ensuring these are prioritised in OPDC's communications:
- **Sustainability** - Deliver a place where we drive the highest standards in sustainability, supporting the Mayor's net zero by 2030 carbon target
 - **Inclusive Growth** – Using our investment activities to deliver jobs, skills, business and education benefits for all. Payment of the London Living Wage is mandated.
 - **Community Engagement** – Meaningful and participative long-term engagement to inform, involve and empower the communities and businesses we serve.
 - **Design Quality** – The key principles, processes and technical requirements needed to embed the highest standards of design and place-making.
- 8.3 Of the four priority themes above, the secondment is anticipated to have the greatest impact on community engagement as set out in the previous section covering Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

9. Other considerations

9.1 There are no other considerations that need to be considered in the taking of this decision.

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 Although this amount (expenditure of up to £31,500) was not included in the original 2026/27 budget, this expenditure is critical to the business and can be managed through the reallocation of existing resources.

12. Legal comments

12.1 No separate legal review is required as this decision is in line with OPDC's governance policies and procedures, including its Scheme of Delegation and Contracts and Funding Code

Appendices

- **None**

Other supporting papers

- [DD010 – Communications Support](#)

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

Matthew Neylan, Head of Communications and Engagement has drafted this Form in accordance with OPDC procedures, including for handling conflicts of interests, and confirm that:

Advice: The Governance, Finance teams and 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 Thursday 4 June 2026.

FINANCE AUTHORISATION: Philip Hall, Head of Finance

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



Signature:

Date: 04/06/2026

GOVERNANCE AUTHORISATION: Martin Harrison, Head of Governance
Governance implications have been appropriately considered in the preparation of this
form.

Signature: 

Date: 04/06/2026

FINANCE AUTHORISATION: [\[Click and add name and job title\]](#)

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

Signature:

Date:

GOVERNANCE AUTHORISATION: [\[Click and add name and job title\]](#)

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

Signature:

Date: