

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2716

Major Sports Events GB Basketball Women's Game Support

Executive summary:

The GLA has been working closely with GB Basketball, and promoters TEG, to bring USA and GB Basketball games to London this summer. The Major Sports Events (MSE) team wishes to provide support to the event to ensure the Women's GB Basketball game take place at the Copper Box; and is well attended and accessible to London's communities.

The MSE team is seeking approval for £12,500 of funding from the MSE budget (2024-25) to support this activity.

In his manifesto, the Mayor of London pledged to boost access to basketball. Provision of funding for these games will enable London's communities to access professional basketball, whilst contributing to London's wider ambition to bring the National Basketball Association back to London.

Decision:

That the Assistant Director of External Relations approves spend of up to £12,500 from the Major Sports Events annual budget (2024-25) to support the delivery of the Women's GB Basketball game at the Copper Box in London.

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: Nicole Valentinuzzi

Position: Assistant Director, External Relations

Signature:



Date:

01/07/2024

PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. To maintain its position as the sporting capital of the world, London must continue to secure and deliver a further strong portfolio of major sports events. London's Strategic Framework 2023-30 outlines how the Major Sports Events (MSE) team will achieve this.
- 1.2. A key priority for the Mayor is to secure further global sports events for London. London already plays host to the National Football League and Major League Baseball.
- 1.3. Over the past 18 months, the MSE team has been working with the National Basketball Association (NBA) and National Hockey League (NHL) to build partnerships to secure future series in London.
- 1.4. Basketball is a priority global sport for the Mayor of London. In his 2024 manifesto, the Mayor pledged to develop and grow basketball in London, by helping to boost access to the sport and campaigning to bring the NBA to the capital.
- 1.5. As a step toward achieving this, the MSE team has been working with the NBA and their delivery partner TEG, to secure a USA Basketball Showcase in London ahead of the Paris Olympic Games.
- 1.6. The O2 Arena will host the USA Men's team against South Sudan and Germany on 20 and 22 July 2024 respectively and the USA Women's team against Germany on 23 July 2024.
- 1.7. As part of GB Basketball's agreement to sanction the USA Basketball games in London, TEG committed to work in partnership with GB Basketball to support and deliver two GB Basketball games in London, in conjunction with the USA Basketball games.
- 1.8. The GB games will take place at the Copper Box Arena, where the GB Men's team will play South Sudan on 18 July 2024; and the GB Women's team will play Germany on 21 July 2024.
- 1.9. Since tickets went on sale in May, sales have been slow for the GB Women's match. TEG has proposed cancelling the Women's GB game, due to the low-ticket sales – with profits not meeting the operational costs to deliver this game in London.
- 1.10. The MSE team has worked with stakeholders to try to mitigate this risk including:
 - securing preferential hire rates for the use of the Copper Box Arena, meaning a saving of £15,500
 - ensuring the GLA family (the GLA and the London Legacy Development Corporation) and GLL (Copper Box operators) commit to supporting event promotion and ticket sales
 - working with the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) and the Community Sport Team to design and implement a Women and Girls inspiration day, centred around the GB Women's game, for over 200 young people.
- 1.11. Despite the above, the organisers still face significant financial challenges. Without further funding, the GB Women's game will be cancelled.
- 1.12. London has a strong track record of supporting and showcasing women's sport. It is crucial for the capital that women's basketball is represented during this significant basketball weekend.
- 1.13. Cancellation of the event poses a reputational risk for the GLA (with Mayor of London branding already associated with the GB games), and would negatively impact the broader efforts to promote and develop basketball in London. This directly impacts the NBA games coming back to the city. The NBA has been clear in discussions that London and the UK needs a supported and thriving basketball ecosystem to justify the return of the games.

- 1.14. Ultimately, the cancellation would signal a lack of support for women's sports, contradicting the Mayor's broader objectives for gender equality and sports development. This support is essential for ensuring the event's success; and setting a foundation for future sustainability and growth of women's basketball in the UK.
- 1.15. Support for the GB Basketball games aligns with wider MSE ambitions – namely, bringing further global franchises to London; expanding London's international sporting events calendar; developing positive and effective partnerships with sporting bodies and delivering economic benefit to London. The popularity of women's sport is on the rise. with the Women's Sports Trust reporting that it could generate up to £1bn annually by 2030, aligned with current growth trends. Women's sporting events in England (such as the Women's Euros 2022) generated £81m in economic benefit to the UK.
- 1.16. Financial support from the MSE budget will ensure the success of the games, and support our existing partnerships with GB Basketball and the NBA. This will influence London's prospects of hosting NBA games in the future.
- 1.17. The MSE team wishes to provide a one-time financial commitment of £12,500 from the MSE budget for 2024-25 to support with operational costs and marketing; and ensure the Women's game remains part of the schedule. This will ensure the event is not cancelled. This contribution is around 6 per cent of the total event budget. The remaining 94 per cent will continue to be covered by the TEG and its partners. Providing support contributes to the future sustainability of women's basketball by increasing viewership and participation; raising the sports profile; and giving professional players the opportunity to play the best teams competitively leading to further development and success of the GB teams.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1. The following objectives are to be met through supporting this activity:
 - ensure the women's GB Basketball game at the Copper Box takes place
 - demonstrate London's commitment to supporting and promoting women's sport
 - enhance the profile of basketball in London, aligning with the Mayor's manifesto commitment to the sport
 - supporting MSE framework priorities
 - demonstrate London's commitment to basketball, to support wider discussions with the NBA around the return of NBA games to London
 - provide Londoners and visitors with the opportunity to engage and participate in basketball in London
 - benefit from GB Basketball and partner promotion of London
 - support the commercial viability of basketball events in London.

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; and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- 3.2. The MSE team will ensure that as many Londoners as possible, including those with protected characteristics (as defined in the Equality Act 2010), are considered in the planning of the event.
- 3.3. The GLA will continue to work with the organisers to ensure that it is an accessible venue.
- 3.4. The GB Basketball games will be inclusive and aimed at all Londoners. This will be achieved through the programme content; the broad and targeted approach to marketing channels; and access facilities at the event, which specifically aim to reduce barriers to attendance for people with disabilities or mobility issues.

4. Other considerations

- 4.1. Funding will be provided to TEG following approval via a funding agreement. This will set out, in principle, the objectives and outcomes of the funding. An officer from the MSE team will be responsible for managing this agreement; and providing updates to the senior management team.
- 4.2. The lead MSE manager will chair a project board with TEG and GB Basketball to ensure funding is spent as agreed. They will be responsible for monitoring progress of the project and budget; and will report to MSE Senior Management.
- 4.3. There are no known conflicts of interests or interests to declare associated with this decision, including from officers drafting or clearing this decision.
- 4.4. Potential risks are detailed in the table below:

Risk	Likelihood/impact	Response and mitigation
The Mayor's missions and aims are not incorporated into the event.	Low/medium	The MSE team will work closely with TEG to ensure the event delivers real benefit to Londoners, in line with the Mayor's missions. This will be monitored by the project board, which will include the lead GLA MSE manager; the promoter TEG; and GB Basketball.
Due to an international crisis (e.g., pandemic, war) the event faces potential significant changes/cancellation.	Low/low	The MSE team will work closely with the event organisers to monitor risks, and report back to the MSE senior management team.
The event sponsors do not align with GLA sponsorship policy.	Low/medium	The MSE team will work closely with the organisers to make them aware of the GLA's sponsorship policy, and negate any conflicts here.
Reputational risk: Failure to support the women's game could result in negative publicity and undermine the GLA's commitment to gender equality in sports.	Medium/high	The MSE team endeavours to demonstrate London's support for the event through facilitation of funding, partner support and marketing to enable the event.

4.5. Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

GLA support for the event will:

- increase economic investment into London
- increase international exposure for London as the world's leading city for sport

- supports London's relationships with the NBA and GB Basketball, both of which are key stakeholders

4.6. The table below shows how the event aligns to the Mayor's manifesto:

Giving young Londoners opportunities to thrive	The MSE team will engage the Civil Society and Sport, and the VRU to support the event including building a partnership with GB Basketball to deliver a programme that provides opportunities for young people to engage in basketball.
Growing our economy	Event goes tend to make events a full day out and spend directly in the local area. With a Mayoral focus on supporting attendance to attractions and hospitality in the City, this activation would be another draw for visitors to the city driving economic impact.
Helping Londoners to live in good health	This activity directly supports active lives by promoting physical activity. The MSE team will work with GB Basketball to identify pathways to participating in the sport in London, post event.
Undisputed sports capital of the world	This activity demonstrates London's commitment to basketball which will contribute to future conversations with the NBA regarding the return of regular season games to the City. Funding also directly supports GB Basketball in London, enabling the GB Women's game to take place at the Copper Box Arena.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1. The £12,500 cost of this event will be covered by the MSE budget within the Strategy and Communications Directorate. There is sufficient cover in the MSE budget to fund this spend.

6. Planned delivery approach and next steps

- 6.1. The next steps are summarised below:

Activity	Timeline
Confirm funding with event organisers	June 2024
Draft and sign off funding agreement	June 2024
Receive invoice	June 2024
Incorporate GLA community sport team involvement	Ongoing
Deliver event	21 July 2024

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: Commercially sensitive for partners – defer until post event and securing of NBA games in London.

Until what date: 1 July 2026

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:

Lottie England has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Mayoral Delivery Board

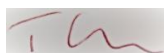
This decision was agreed by the Mayoral Delivery Board on 1 July 2024.

✓

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, FINANCIAL SERVICES:

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

Signature:



Date:

01/07/2024

PP on behalf of Anna Casbolt