

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD367

Future of London Housing Zones Network

Executive Summary:

Future of London 2011 Limited (FoL), a not-for-profit policy network, runs a number of career development programmes for practitioners working in the regeneration, housing, transport and economic development sectors in London. The GLA is a member of the FoL network and in Summer 2015, invited FoL to develop a similar programme of learning and networking for public sector employees working on Housing Zones. A proposal was received in Autumn 2015. This decision seeks approval for expenditure of £15,000 to enter into contract with FoL to run the programme, which will be known as the Housing Zones Network. It also seeks approval of single source exemption in accordance with section 5 of the GLA Contracts and Funding Code.

Decision:

That the Assistant Director approves:

- Expenditure of up to £15,000 to enter into contract with FoL to run a Housing Zones Network, and
- An exemption from the requirements of the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code to allow the GLA to enter into the contract with FoL without prior competition up to £15,000 expenditure.

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: Jamie Ratcliff

Position: Assistant Director – Programme,
Policy & Services

Signature:



Date:

8/12/15

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 Future of London 2011 Limited (FoL), an independent not-for-profit policy network, runs two bespoke development programmes aimed at creating learning and development opportunities and a forum for networking and sharing of best practice for practitioners in the regeneration, housing and infrastructure sectors in London. These two programmes are primarily funded through FoL membership fees.
- 1.2 In Summer 2015, FoL was approached by the Assistant Director for Programme, Policy & Services and invited to develop a bespoke network for public sector officers working on Housing Zones to run alongside the life of the programme. Based on GLA feedback a Housing Zone Network, modelled in part after the Future London Leaders and Leaders Plus programme, was proposed as follows:
- a. The Housing Zones Network will share elements with the Future London Leaders programme, involving many of the same people, and providing a combination of knowledge and network with the potential for site visits.
 - b. The key differences will be:
 - Specificity/depth – the course will include CPD-style modules with instructors from the legal, planning, finance and design sectors.
 - Breadth – organisations can involve several members of staff; sessions will range from 30-person masterclasses to 80+ networking/speaker events; technical sessions can be repeated sub-regionally to reach all involved.
 - Online resource – a ‘Help’ forum where people seek answers to pressing questions
 - c. Eligibility will be open to public-sector organisations working on a Housing Zone, to include at minimum the GLA, local authorities, housing associations and TfL. FoL members will pay a lower rate, but non-members are also eligible. The GLA will be able to nominate a minimum of 6 members of staff to attend sessions.
 - d. Operating costs will range from £1,000-£2,500 per organisation depending on participation levels but is conditional on additional funding being secured in the amount of £15,000. The price will be £1,200 + VAT for members and £2,500 + VAT for non-members per year.

Funding

- 1.3 FoL is a not-for-profit organisation that relies primarily on membership and participation fees to fund their programmes. These sources of funding are not sufficient to fund a new Housing Zone Network unless the fees are significantly increased. This would dissuade take up and run counterproductive to the network’s aim of pulling together various stakeholders across the Housing Zones programme.
- 1.4 Savings could be found by reducing the scope of the Network, for example by abandoning the online resource, number of masterclasses or courses. This, however, would also reduce the appeal of the network to stakeholders and could result in reduced take up.
- 1.5 The Housing Zone Network will have the following benefits to the GLA:

- a. The Network will focus solely on the GLA's Housing Zones Programme, helping to give those working on zones the knowledge and skills they need to deliver.
- b. GLA officers and those they work with will have a forum to share best practise and lessons learned across zones.
- c. GLA officers and those they work with will have an online resource to look up answers to pressing questions.
- d. GLA officers and those they work with will have a number of training and development opportunities that will expand their knowledge and promote innovation.
- e. As key stakeholder and contributor, senior GLA staff will be able to feed into the network and steer on how it is run.

- 1.6 In recognition of the above benefits this decisions seeks approval to enter into contract with FoL to run the network. The GLA will pay £15,000 which will bridge the gap between the participation fees and total costs of delivering the network for one year. This contribution will be reviewed annually and require a separate decision if made in future years.

Single Source Exemption

- 1.7 The GLA Contracts and Funding Code allows for a supplier to be selected without competition, if the supplier has previous involvement in a specific current project or continuation of existing work, which cannot be separated from the new work.
- 1.8 To this end, FoL is already running a network of London boroughs and already offers development training. More specifically, FoL has a membership that includes 27 London boroughs, Transport for London and a number of key housing associations and is already running the type of development & networking programme that could easily be adapted for Housing Zones. There are no other organisations in London with the same membership and programmes on offer.
- 1.9 Consideration was given to conducting an open tender; however, a prospective supplier would have to create a new network from scratch to involve the same organisations that are already actively involved in the FoL network. This would cause considerable delays to the formation of the network and would result in the network having limited influence supporting officers involved in the initial planning and contracting stages of the zones.
- 1.10 It is also unlikely key stakeholders would want to be part of a separate network just for Housing Zones.

Declarations

- 1.11 It is noted that David Lunts, GLA Executive Directorate for Housing & Land, is Chair of FoL's Board of Directors and a member of FoL and Stewart Murray, GLA Assistant Director for Planning, is a Board member. In order to avoid any conflicts of interest, neither officer was involved in the decision by the GLA to use the services of FoL, and neither will be involved in the management of the contract.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1 The programme will involve two components but will run in some form for the life of the Housing Zone work:
- 2.2 Tier 1 (most of programme weighting):

- Expert instructors from finance, planning, law, development, design, governance
- Potential for group work, peer-to-peer presentations
- Working site visits
- Online help forum

2.3 Tier 2 (bimonthly or quarterly, to unfold fairly organically):

- Leadership/team skills; option for personal development/support, including signposting for stress, ethics, work/life balance etc.
- Network support and socialising – e.g. working breakfasts tied to course modules, debates or other evening events.

2.4 The expected outcomes will result in:

- Greater capacity and skills around Housing Zone-specific issues
- Officers better equipped to deliver competently and quickly as individuals and teams
- More efficient sharing of successful ideas and practices; better chance of not repeating mistakes and avoiding pitfalls
- Greater feeling of support from the GLA, but not controlled; part of something bigger
- Ongoing external publicity of HZ progress, successes, outcomes
- Support best practice in this and future rounds

3. Equality comments

3.1 The public sector equality duty requires the identification and evaluation of the likely potential impacts, both positive and negative, of the decision on those with protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, gender, religion or belief, sexual orientation) and set out how you are addressing the duties.

3.2 The public sector equality duty will be taken into consideration by each organisation when selecting nominees for the network.

4. Other considerations

Risk	Mitigation Strategy	Lead
Low interest from public sector organisations dealing with housing zones	Future of London programmes are generally oversubscribed; however, if there is low uptake, GLA officers could contact partners to encourage participation. The overall likelihood of this risk is low.	GLA
As with any network, there is a risk overall objectives are not met or realised by individual members.	The network will be reviewed in August 2016 to ensure overall objectives are met and to make adjustments if needed. The GLA contribution will also be reviewed.	FoL

5. Financial comments

5.1 The proposed contract of up to £15,000 to the Future of London organisation for the provision of a Housing Zones Network will be funded from the existing 2015-16 Housing & Land Directorate budget. Any changes to this proposal, including budgetary implications and future year contracts

will be subject to further approval via the Authority's decision-making process. All appropriate budget adjustments will be made.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1 Under section 30 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 (the 'Act') the GLA, after appropriate consultation, is entitled to do anything that will further the promotion, within Greater London, of economic development and wealth creation, social development and the improvement of the environment.
- 6.2 Furthermore, section 34 of the Act allows the GLA, to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the exercise of any functions of the GLA. In this case, the procurement of FoL to assist with the Housing Zones project may be viewed as being calculated to facilitate social development in Greater London.
- 6.3 Paragraph 5.4 of the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code (the "Code") lists the grounds, upon which the assistant director may authorise an exemption from the requirements of the Code. Paragraph 5.4 provides the reasons for the exemption including that reason that the supplier has previous involvement in a specific current project or continuation of existing work, which cannot be separated from the new work. The officers have set out at paragraph's 1.7 to 1.10 the reasons in support of their request for an exemption from the requirements of the Code. Accordingly, the assistant director may authorise an exemption from the Code, if he is satisfied that the grounds to justify an exemption have been satisfied.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

- 7.1 The programme will be delivered and completed as outline in the timetable below:

Activity	Timeline
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Launch event• Online forum goes live• Rolling CPD sessions start (mornings), with 4 or 5 repeats• Rolling peer-to-peer network sessions start	Autumn 2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mid-year review with GLA, major players	March 2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Programme adjustments, evaluate funding/pricing, first-year report	August 2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Repeat/fine-tune annual programme, assuming appetite continues	October 2016

Appendices and supporting papers:

Single Source Request Form

Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI Act) 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 either be published within one working day after approval or on the defer date.

Part 1 Deferral:

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? NO

If YES, for what reason:

Until what date: (a date is required if deferring)

Part 2 Confidentiality: Only the facts or advice considered to be exempt from disclosure under the FOI Act should be 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:

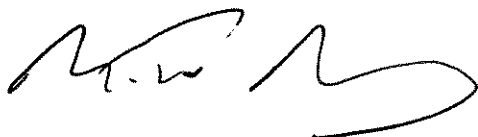
Heath Pritchard has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms that the Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal as required, and this decision reflects their comments.

✓

HEAD OF GOVERNANCE AND RESILIENCE:

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

Signature:



Date:

08.12.15