

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2584

Title: Surface water flooding – basements campaign

Executive Summary:

The Mayor convened a roundtable meeting after the July 2021 flooding to improve the response to surface water flooding on London, and reduce its impact. An officer-led task and finish group was also set up, with a workstream focusing on Londoners living in basements due to their greater vulnerability to flash flooding. Approval is now sought for expenditure on this workstream, and specifically a leaflet information and engagement campaign.

The leaflet will be distributed to 46,832 residential basement properties in London, with key messages about the risk and what to do if a flash flood event is forecast. There will also be linked communications and engagement through community groups and digital media. This campaign is planned to be launched in London Climate Action Week with leaflets distributed before the anniversary of the summer floods (12 July).

Decision:

That the Assistant Director of Environment and Energy approves:

1. expenditure of £30,000 towards the basement leafletting campaign. This includes print, envelope and distribution of leaflets to basement residents across London. This also includes funds for wider communications to Londoners to target the most vulnerable to flooding, for example older and disabled Londoners.

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: Catherine Barber

Position: Assistant Director of
Environment and Energy

Signature:



Date:

28/6/22

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. In Summer 2021, London was hit by severe flash flooding. The rain caused damage and disruption to homes and businesses across the city. Many Londoners had to stay elsewhere as their homes were flooded with stormwater and sewage. The Mayor convened a roundtable with an associated task and finish group to make sure everything possible was being done to address the longer term risk of surface water flooding due to climate change. The group has also looked at the response to and reducing the impacts of extreme events in London.
- 1.2. The recommendations of the task and finish group on surface water flooding were reported to London Councils Transport and Environment Committee (TEC) and through the Mayor's Roundtable Progress Report on surface water flooding earlier this year. The recommendations were to establish a 'Strategic Group' to provide collective leadership on surface water management in London. This group will lead the development and delivery of a London wide strategic-level surface water management vision, strategy and plan, with an associated communications strategy.
- 1.3. A transition group was formed to succeed the task and finish group, made up of the same partner organisations. This is to take this work forward until a Strategic Group is agreed and established to take on governance, strategy and plan development.
- 1.4. Further task and finish group recommendations included a separate workstream on basement dwellings due to their greater vulnerability to flash flooding. It is this workstream, and specifically a leafletting and associated communications campaign to which this ADD relates.
- 1.5. The basements workstream is expected to be in multiple phases. In the interim, in order to deliver a basement outreach campaign ahead of the anniversary of the floods, the immediate focus is to inform residents of basement properties of the risks of flash flooding and what to do before and during a flash flood. Longer term actions will follow to improve data on basement properties at risk.
- 1.6. The campaign will include a leaflet which will be distributed to 46,832 basement properties in London, with key messages about the risk and what to do in advance of and if a flash flood event is forecast. Care has been taken to balance the need not to raise undue concern against the level of risk.
- 1.7. Development of the leaflet has been led by the GLA's climate adaptation team but partners, including members of the surface water flooding transition group, have been closely involved. The climate adaptation team set up a basement subgroup which has met twice and has been well attended by partner agencies.
- 1.8. The leaflet content has been drafted with input from the Environment Agency, Thames Water, London Fire Brigade, London Resilience, GLA Urban Resilience team, London Councils (who shared with borough communications leads) and the London Drainage Engineers Group (borough Local Lead Flood Authorities are represented on this group). Comments were received from 17 different individuals or groups and incorporated as far as possible into an updated version of the leaflet.

- 1.9. The leaflet is being designed by the GLA's design team following the Mayor of London branding. The GLA's print supplier CDS Ltd. has provided a quote of £22,554.40 to print, envelope and distribute 46,832 leaflets to basement residents across London.
- 1.10. This leaflet drop will be accompanied by information dissemination via a range of other channels including distribution via community groups and faith groups and neighbourhood networks, and digital comms/social media. Targeting of those Londoners most at risk will be prioritised such as older and disabled people as well as those that have English as a second language.
- 1.11. At present, it is anticipated that £7000 of this £30,000 will be required for leaflets distribution to community groups and wider information sharing sessions to those Londoners most at risk. The Assistant Director will confirm the exact purpose of this expenditure through a Record in Writing' that sets out the final decision for where the money has been allocated.
- 1.12. We are working with other GLA teams including Environment communications team, External Relations, the Urban Resilience Team, the Communities Team and the Migration Team (to consider the private rented sector and the specific needs of migrants in basement dwellings), as well as London Resilience Group and external partners on identifying the most effective channels to target alongside a physical mailout/leaflet drop.
- 1.13. The 46,832 properties were identified through various data sources. Ordnance Survey Addressbase Plus dataset identified just under 30,000 properties. Working with Geoplace, who are the central source of information for all UK addresses and streets, we identified nearly 14,000 more addresses using energy performance certificates (EPC). Another 1,200 were identified from the GLA planning team's Datahub and 1,900 were identified from the GLA's building stock model.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

2.1. The objectives of the campaign are to:

- Raise awareness about the risk and what to do in advance of and if a flash flood event is forecast.
- Reach as many basement properties as possible through this leafletting campaign.
- Encourage individuals and communities to take low/no-cost actions before a period of flash flooding and explain what to do during a flood.

2.2. The expected outcomes of the campaign are:

- Basement residents to be more aware of their potential risk from flash flooding and what actions to take if one is forecast in their area.
- Londoners generally to be more aware of their risk from flash flooding through the wider communications work.

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 as well as to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who have a

protected characteristic¹ and those who do not. This involves having due regard to the need to remove or minimise any disadvantage suffered by those who share a relevant protected 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.

- 3.2. Climate change will disproportionately affect those least able to respond and recover from it. Poorer Londoners will find it more difficult to recover from flooding. Extreme events will have a greater impact on older people, very young children, socially isolated people and people with existing health conditions and disabilities. This campaign aims to inform people of their potential risk and what they can do to help themselves.
- 3.3. This campaign is specifically trying to target those more vulnerable to the effect of flash flooding, those living in basements. As part of the wider communications around the leaflet, the campaign will be targeting older and disabled Londoners to make sure they receive the information to help reduce their risk.

4. Other considerations

- 4.1. The key risks and issues for leaflet campaign are:

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation	RAG rating
Timeline slips as deadlines for leaflet design and delivery are tight (section 7.1.)	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working closely with design and the delivery company CDS to make sure we are all working effectively and to the same date. 	AMBER
The leaflet isn't received well by certain groups of people (e.g. those that have already been flooded)	Medium	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with community groups and flood action groups to make sure the wider communications around flooding are disseminated. 	GREEN
Boroughs get excessive calls after the leaflet delivery and are not aware of the campaign	Low	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with London Councils to make sure all boroughs are aware of the campaign. This will also be raised to Chair of the London Council Transport and Environment Committee, Mayor Glanville. 	GREEN

- 4.2. The basement leaflet campaign will contribute towards:

¹ 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. 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. Conscientious regard must be had that is appropriate in all of the circumstances.

- London Environment Strategy Proposal 8.2.1.a: The Mayor will work with partners to increase awareness of all forms of flood risk across London and develop options for targeting areas at particular risk from surface water flooding
- London Resilience Strategy Action A5: Community Risk Communication – Build resilience in communities by developing ways of communicating risks to the public.
- The recommendations in the Mayor’s Surface Water Flooding Roundtable Progress Report

4.3. None of the GLA officers involved in the drafting or clearance of this form are aware that they have any conflicts of interest with the proposed programme.

4.4. The address data that will be used contains no personal information; no names are part of the address. The letter will be addressed to “basement resident”.

5. Financial comments

5.1. £30,000 is required for an engagement campaign aimed at Londoner’s living in basements who are susceptible to flash flooding.

5.2. The campaign will include the design, printing, enveloping and distribution of leaflets to around 47,000 basement property residents. The Authority’s internal design team will design the leaflet whilst a suitable supplier, CDS limited, has been identified who has the capacity to carry out the remaining activities on behalf of the GLA.

5.3. This expenditure can be funded by the 2022-23 Adaptation budget held within the Environment and Energy Unit.

6. Legal comments

6.1. Legal advised comments are not required on this ADD.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Procurement of printing and delivery	By 16 th June latest
Announcement 29 th June during LCAW	29 th June
Leaflet Delivery Start Date	1 st July

Appendices and supporting papers:

List or state none

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 either be published 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? NO

Part 2 – Sensitive information

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under 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:

Holly Smith has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Corporate Investment Board

A summary of this decision was reviewed by the Corporate Investment Board on 27 June 2022

✓

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE: Tricia Clark on behalf of Anna Casbolt

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

Signature



Date

29/6/22