

CEO DECISION – CD 151

Title: PRBG Manager Grant 2021-23

Executive Summary:

One of OPDC's objectives is to support the Park Royal business community to have a strong independent voice and increase its capability to address some issues raised by businesses operating in the area. To this end, OPDC has supported the Park Royal Business Group (PRBG) during its re-establishment. OPDC would like to continue to support the PRBG over the next 24 months and continue to grow its presence, capability and support for Park Royal businesses.

The PRBG operates within the administrative and financial umbrella of West London Business Ltd (WLB), a business-led non-profit organisation. OPDC will provide a grant to WLB to fund the PRBG Manager post for two years (from March 2021 to 2023). The objectives for the PRBG Manager during this time will be to:

- Increase membership of PRBG
- Ensure the PRBG Board meets regularly and provides effective governance for PRBG
- Provide opportunities for businesses to network and collaborate

These objectives and their related targets will be detailed in the OPDC/WLB Grant Agreement, which will be drafted and subject to this approval.

Decision:

The Chief Executive Officer is asked to approve:

- Total expenditure of up to £95,000 in the form of a grant to West London Business Ltd. The grant will be used to pay for the PRBG Manager's salary (with on costs) and event costs for PRBG. The grant period will run from March 2021 to March 2023.

CEO AUTHORISATION

I have reviewed the request and am satisfied it is correct and consistent with the OPDC business plan and priorities. It has my approval.

Name: *David Lunts*

Position: Chief Executive Officer



Signature:

Date: 23 December 2020

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1 Introduction and background

- 1.1 Park Royal is London's largest industrial estate. It accommodates a wide range of businesses from small start-ups to large multi-national brands which operate across a range of sectors. The Mayor's London Plan sets a target for an additional 10,000 new jobs and 1,500 new homes across Park Royal.
- 1.2 The Park Royal Business Group (PRBG) represents the only independent collective body for businesses and landowners in Park Royal. OPDC has supported the re-establishment of the PRBG over the last two years supporting the recruitment of a PRBG manager, growing membership to c.125 members, recruiting new board members and providing secretariat support to the Group's governance and running a number of business focused events.
- 1.3 PRBG operates within the administrative and financial umbrella of West London Business Ltd (WLB) which is a business-led non-profit organisation established in 1994 whose members commit to work together to raise West London's global economic competitiveness, whilst pursuing social and environmental sustainability.
- 1.4 PRBG is governed and represented by PRBG Board, a Board of volunteers from the business community.
- 1.5 In 2018, OPDC awarded a grant of £74,164 to West London Business (WLB) to recruit a Park Royal Business Group (PRBG) Manager for two years (CD080). This was a new post and the objectives for the PRBG Manager were to:
 - provide secretariat support to the PRBG Board;
 - increase PRBG membership;
 - deliver a programme of events;
 - provide support and advice to businesses;
 - support business engagement for OPDC led initiatives; and
 - provide a voice for businesses.
- 1.6 The grant period started in March 2018 and ends in March 2020. To date, the PRBG manager has delivered against these objectives including increasing membership to circa 125 and running a range of successful events.
- 1.7 At the end of the current two-year grant period (Mar 2020), OPDC had hoped to explore the option of establishing a Business Improvement District (BID). A BID is a business-led organisation in a defined geographical area where local businesses have voted to invest collectively to improve their environment.
- 1.8 A BID provides a financially sustainable long-term platform that gives businesses greater ownership over local initiatives and a stronger voice for the future of the industrial estate. However, given the current economic environment OPDC does not think it is appropriate to explore BID options at present. Instead OPDC would like to continue the good work of the PRBG Manager by providing a grant to WLB to retain the post for another two years.
- 1.9 Awarding the grant aligns with the OPDC Delivery Directorate's priorities around business engagement as set out in the Industrial Regeneration Programme. The industrial regeneration programme seeks to address the most pressing issues and capitalise on opportunities over the

next ten years. It has been developed in consultation with businesses and stakeholders and through work that forms the Park Royal evidence base.

1.10 The programme is structured around four themes:

- **Innovation** – setting the benchmark for the future of industry in London
 - Clean Growth
 - Energy Infrastructure
 - 5G Testbeds
 - Digital Connectivity
- **Infrastructure** – Building capacity to support growth and creating a safer, healthier environment
 - Transport
- **Business and People** – supporting businesses, employees and residents to thrive
 - Business Engagement
 - Employment and Skills
- **Place** – Create a more desirable place to live, work and visit
 - Placemaking
 - Promotion
 - Resilient communities

2 Objectives and expected outcomes

2.1 In providing a two-year grant for the PRBG Manager post, OPDC aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Increase membership of PRBG
- Ensure the PRBG Board meets regularly and provides effective governance for PRBG
- Provide opportunities for businesses to network and collaborate
- Work towards establishing a BID

Increase PRBG membership

2.2 It is easier for OPDC to work proactively with the business community and ensure businesses are aware of and included in OPDC's regeneration plans if OPDC can engage with an effective business group that represents a healthy proportion of businesses on the estate. As such, when the PRBG Manager started one of their main objectives was to drive up PRBG membership.

2.3 In April 2019, there were 37 members in total, including partners and pro bono stakeholders. As of 25th November 2020, there are 126 PRBG members with 37 applications pending. Over the next two-year grant period, OPDC will agree a membership target with WLB of an additional 100-150 members. These targets will be set out in the OPDC/WLB Grant Agreement.

PRBG Board

2.4 PRBG Board is made up of volunteers from the business community and provides a voice for businesses.

2.5 When the PRBG Manager started there not had been a permanent PRBG Board Chair for over a year and Board meetings were held irregularly and poorly attended. One of the PRBG Manager's key objectives was to provide secretariat support to PRBG Board. Over the past two years, the PRBG Manager has recruited new Board members, secured a permanent Chair and ensured the Board meets regularly each quarter.

2.6 OPDC attends PRBG Board meetings as an observer. This allows us to gain insight on issues affecting the estate raised by Board members at the meeting. OPDC is also able to use this forum to provide updates, present ideas and gain feedback on current and future projects. The Board also influences the work and priorities of the PRBG Manager.

2.7 OPDC will agree targets with WLB around board meetings (a minimum of 3 per year) and the diversity of the board.

Opportunities for networking and collaboration

2.8 Back in 2018, the PRBG Manager was tasked with delivering a programme of events to enable a two-way flow of information between OPDC, other key stakeholders and the local business community.

2.9 Over the past two years, the PRBG Manager has run over 12 events, which have included:

- The PRBG Infrastructure Summit – This event has been held twice. OPDC used the 2019 summit to gather feedback and evidence to develop proposals for OPDC's TfL Liveable Neighbourhoods Fund application which was submitted in November 2019.
- The Cyber Fraud and Community Safety Forum – This forum has been held twice and received good feedback from businesses. It provides an opportunity for businesses to meet their local Safer Neighbourhood Team and the Metropolitan Police Service's (MPS) central Cyber Crime Unit. Both MPS teams provided support and advice to businesses at the event. This has also been a great opportunity for OPDC to strengthen relations with the local and central MPS teams and gain a better understanding of safety issues in the estate.
- The Meet the Boroughs event has also been held twice. It has been well attended and it provides businesses with an opportunity to meet representatives from Ealing and Brent's borough teams (ie planning, transport, business rates etc). OPDC has also connected with a number of businesses at these events.
- The PRBG Manager introduced a new forum in November 2019 – the Park Royal Food Forum. There were over 50 attendees at the first forum, many connections were made and attendees asked for the forum to become a permanent fixture. This forum also helped to inform OPDC's Food Sector Insight report.

2.10 OPDC will agree an events' target with WLB of 6 to 8 events per year.

2.11 The objectives and targets listed above will be developed, agreed and set out in full in the OPDC/WLB Grant Agreement.

3 Equality comments

3.1 There are no particular equalities implications directly arising from the grant. Park Royal Industrial Estate is home to over 1,700 businesses in a range of sectors, sizes and phases of maturity, as well as a diverse mix of business owners and employees. The PRBG Manager will be required to ensure that the events and services they deliver to PRBG member and non-members have 'due regard' to the need to (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not; and (iii) foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do. Protected characteristics under section 149 of the Equality Act are age, disability, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sex orientation, and marriage or civil partnership status (all except the last being "relevant" protected characteristics).

3.2 This condition will be included in the OPDC/WLB Grant Agreement.

4 Other considerations

Risks

4.1 Risk 1 – After receiving the grant in advance, WLB suffers insolvency/wind up before the end of the grant period.

Mitigation – WLB has been working hard to achieve financial stability over the past few years. They have generated financial surpluses over the past 5 years and have successfully rebuilt their financial reserves.

4.2 Risk 2 – WLB CEO has insufficient capacity to effectively supervise the PRBG Manager.

Mitigation – The WLB CEO has successfully expanded the WLB team over the past two years. This has enabled them to step back from some meetings and events and concentrate on managing staff and setting the strategic direction for the organisation.

4.3 Risk 3 – Failure to retain the current PRBG Manager and recruit a good quality replacement.

Mitigation – The WLB CEO will hold fortnightly supervision sessions with the PRBG Manager and arrange staff socials, team days and flexible working arrangements. The PRBG Manager will also be invited to the weekly OPDC Park Royal team meetings to share knowledge and experience. In the event that the current PRBG Manager leaves WLB, the grant agreement period will be temporarily suspended until a suitable replacement has been found.

4.4 Risk 4 - The PRBG Manager has insufficient skills, experience and tools to achieve the objectives and targets set out in the grant agreement.

Mitigation - The WLB CEO will hold fortnightly supervision sessions with the PRBG Manager. If during this process training needs are identified they will be provided. The PRBG Manager will also have the support of the OPDC Park Royal team.

4.5 Risk 5 – The PRBG Manager does not achieve the objectives and targets set out in the grant agreement.

Mitigation – WLB will submit quarterly monitoring reports to OPDC. These will be used to assess performance against targets. If required, OPDC and WLB will work together to develop an action plan to improve performance. If performance is unacceptably low, OPDC reserves the right to request some or all of the grant is returned. This condition will be set out in full in the grant agreement.

5 Financial comments

5.1 This can be contained within the existing budget.

6 Legal comments

6.1 The report above indicates that the decision requested of the Chief Executive falls with the OPDC's object of securing the regeneration of the Old Oak and Park Royal area and its powers

to do anything it considers appropriate for the purpose of its objects or purposes incidental to those purposes, as set out in the Localism Act 2011.

- 6.2 In taking the decisions requested, the Chief Executive 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, and to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment) 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 Chief Executive should have particular regard to section 3 (above) of this report.
- 6.3 Officers must ensure that an appropriate grant funding agreement is put in place and executed by OPDC and WLB before any commitment to funding is made.

7 Planned delivery approach and next steps

- 7.1 The Senior Responsible Owner for this commission is Ben O'Neil and the Lead Officer is Beverley Archer.
- 7.2 Following this approval, OPDC will draft the OPDC/WLB Grant Agreement which will include objectives, targets, final costs, terms and conditions.
- 7.3 WLB will be required to submit quarterly monitoring reports to OPDC detailing progress against the objectives, targets and condition set out in the grant agreement.
- 7.4 At the end of the grant period (which runs from March 2021 to March 2023) WLB will be required to submit an evaluation report assessing the impact of the PRBG Manager.

Activity	Timeline
Draft and agree the OPDC/WLB Grant Agreement	Jan - Feb 2021
Grant period starts	Mar 2021
Quarterly monitoring reports	Jun 2021 – Dec 2022
Final evaluation report	Mar 2023

Appendices and supporting papers:

Appendix A – Impact of the PRBG Manager role Nov 2020

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 OPDC 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:

[DO NOTE DELETE CONTEXT IN THIS BOX]

Drafting officer
to confirm the
following (✓)

Drafting officer:

Beverley Archer has drafted this report in accordance with OPDC procedures and
confirms that:

✓

Financial and Legal advice:

The Finance team has commented on this proposal, and this decision reflects
their comments.

✓

The Legal team has commented on this proposal, and this decision reflects their
comments.

✓

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:

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

Date 23/12/20

Signature



DIRECTOR OF DELIVERY

I confirm that I have reviewed this request and can confirm that I am satisfied it is correct and consistent with the OPDC business plan and priorities. It has my clearance and can be referred to the CEO for final approval.

Signature



Date

23.12.20