

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2000

Title: Appointment of external consultants to update and review biodiversity habitat targets in the review of the London Plan.

Executive Summary:

The current London Plan targets for biodiversity habitats have not been reviewed or updated since 2008. Government guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework requires the planning system to maintain and enhance areas of biodiversity importance in the London Plan.

The forthcoming review of the London Plan will be required to provide updated targets. Specialist environmental consultancies have the necessary expertise to undertake this work. Approval is sought to appoint an appropriate consultancy.

Decision:

That the Assistant Director of Planning approves expenditure of up to £20,000 to procure by competitive tender external consultants to assess progress, identify data and review the biodiversity habitats targets of the London Plan, as set out in the Appendix.

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: Stewart Murray

Position: Assistant Director of Planning

Signature:



Date:

24.6.2016

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 This is a new study and seeks a budget of up to £20,000. This budget was derived at after consultation with colleagues in the Environment Team (Urban Greening) who advised this was a realistic sum for the work required.
- 1.2 Government guidance to planning authorities is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF requires the Mayor to set out targets for the creation and enhancement of land for nature conservation. It will be necessary to appoint specialist environmental consultants, as GLA officers do not have the capacity to undertake this work.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1 Consultants will be required to produce a report that includes: a) a review and update of the current 2008 habitat targets in the London Plan; b) recommendations for potential future ecological or biodiversity targets that can be effectively monitored, and; c) a methodology for determining, monitoring and reviewing future ecological or biodiversity targets.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1 This work is not expected to have any equality impacts. Ensuring that the London Plan habitat targets are up to date and being delivered ensures all Londoners have access to high quality natural environments.

4. Other considerations

a) key risks and issues

- 4.1 The contract will be managed in line with standard GLA risk management procedures. If the work is not commissioned it is possible that the forthcoming review of the London Plan will fail to ensure sufficient land is set aside for biodiversity, preventing the delivery of Mayoral aspirations on nature conservation.

b) links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

- 4.2 This study will provide evidence on a specific land use, which will inform the implementation and review of the London Plan. It will support the emerging Mayoral Environmental Strategy, as well as the London Plan. It will provide evidence to London boroughs on the amount of land to allocate for biodiversity habitats in the preparation of local plans and in partnership working with the GLA in developing Opportunity Area Planning Frameworks.

c) impact assessments and consultations.

- 4.3 The work the consultants will do will be guided by the Specification of Requirements (attached below) and a steering group of GLA officers from the Environment (Urban Greening) and Planning Teams.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1 Approval is being sought for expenditure of £20,000 to procure external consultants to update biodiversity habitat targets. The cost will be met from the Planning 2016-17 London Plan Programme budget. All the delivery and spend will take place within 2016-17.

6. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Procurement of contract	June 2016
Delivery Start Date	July 2016
Delivery End Date	October 2016
Project Closure:	November 2016

Appendices and supporting papers:

- Annex 1 – Consultant's brief

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? YES**

If YES, for what reason:

Part 1 of this approval contains information on the financial ceiling for this project. Releasing this information before the contract is awarded could mean that the GLA does not achieve value for money

Until what date: (a date is required if deferring) July 2016, once contract is awarded

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

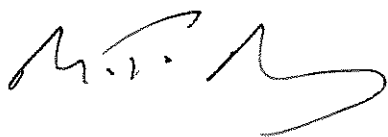
ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:**Drafting officer:**

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

HEAD OF FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE:

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

Signature:



Date:

21.06.16