

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR MAYORAL DECISION – MD2635

Title: New Year's Eve 2020

Executive Summary:

Following the immense impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, London will mark the end of 2020 by delivering a public thank you to the NHS, care staff and key workers that kept our city running over a very challenging year. The New Year's Eve celebrations will focus around a lightshow beamed across the city's skyline and landmarks across London. The proposal is a 45% reduction on the previously identified budget for the 2020 event.

Instead of a live audience on the banks of the Thames, we hope Londoners will come together with friends and neighbours to enjoy the show from their homes. It will be a chance to reflect on a year where so much has changed and look forward with hope to 2021. Through the development of the event we will ensure we have the ability to adjust the messaging and tone as required.

The GLA will work with boroughs and buildings to pull together the full event plan, to be further developed through consultation with the wider GLA, Jack Morton Worldwide and the BBC.

This request seeks approval for expenditure for the development and delivery of a New Year's Eve event in 2020 that also responds appropriately to the unprecedented impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Decision:

That the Mayor approves:

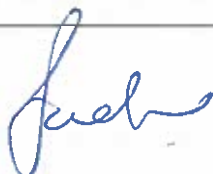
1. Expenditure of up to £1.5 million in 2020-21, to deliver a New Year's Eve event on 31 December 2020; and
2. A related exemption from the requirement of the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code to procure and enter into a contract, without competitive tender, with Jack Morton Worldwide, to scope and deliver the New Year's Eve 2020 event.

Mayor of London

I confirm that I do not have any disclosable pecuniary interests in the proposed decision and take the decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct for elected Members of the Authority.

The above request has my approval.

Signature:



Date:

12/08/20

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE TO THE MAYOR

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. This decision form requests approval for expenditure of up to £1.5m in financial year 2020-21 to deliver London's New Year's Eve event, including costs of development and delivery of an event within the context of impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 1.2. The budget amount requested is a 45% reduction from the previously identified budget of £2.75m. This reflects the immediate need for GLA budget constraints due to the pandemic, responds to the national mood around the wider economic context and reflects that a mass attendance event (with associated cost implications) is not deliverable within the expected public health constraints.
- 1.3. The international profile that London receives from the New Year's Eve event is significant, with media reach of over 10 million viewers on BBC One, millions more online and through the BBC's international partners, and more than 20 million people through international print media. This positive profile enhances London's global reputation, which supports long-term economic impact through increased tourism and investment.
- 1.4. Whilst legislation is in the process of changing for some events and gatherings, the continuing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic mean that even if mass gatherings of scale were legal by December, it is not possible to deliver the existing New Year's Eve plan with social distancing. Consideration also needs to be made as to whether the GLA should deliver an event, as the previous NYE's London Eye firework displays, that might put further pressure on the emergency services and the transport network. Social distancing and other measures may well change between now and New Year's Eve, but it is not possible to predict with accuracy what changes will occur or what the position will be in December. Therefore, the only safe option is to plan a NYE which will move away from the mass gathering format.
- 1.5. As such, the timeframe to work through and develop concepts for an event to mark New Year's Eve in 2020 has been significantly impacted as we sought to understand and consider the potential options due to the unprecedented impact of COVID-19; including understanding when and how long the peak of the pandemic would impact London, the restrictions imposed to prevent its spread, and the longer-term impact of this pandemic. As noted above, there is still some uncertainty as to the position we will be in come December, but our plans are being developed with a greater understanding of the likely scenarios.
- 1.6. The scale of this revised event will require circa five months planning as it will still require operational planning with over 50 partners and statutory agencies, who need to be actively engaged to successfully deliver the event. Both the design of the lightshow/ special effects (SFX) and the communications to public will be designed to specifically minimise the risk of any crowds forming. The £1.5m budget includes some contingency, if required, to address any serious and unresolvable concerns which the statutory agencies may have during the planning process regarding stewarding and crowd management, thus reducing some of the potential impact on MPS resources and allowing their focus on core policing functions. It does remain however that the event is to be delivered in a way that significantly minimises the risk of crowds forming.
- 1.7. The proposed event will be multi-site visual light/special effects (SFX), focussed in the sky and designed for broadcast with no on-site audience. Whilst the nature of the broadcast show is still to be defined, the ambition is to deliver a fully choreographed and cohesive show consisting of lighting and other special effects, at locations which will include London landmarks. Discussions are underway with the BBC as our broadcast partner, enabling us to reach a national and global audience. As this is core

to the purpose of the event we will, as previous years, work to draw up an agreement with the BBC, who will also form part of the core group informing the creative.

- 1.8. A key part of the project will be to define the messages and themes that the Mayor wants to convey. The suggested theme would focus on hope, recovery, renewal and emergence from a difficult period and the opportunity to galvanise change, concluding in an uplifting tone. Intrinsic to the planning will be to link with GLA communications campaigns to ensure the project delivers clear messaging of this theme, as well as to respond to any potential change in the tone of the event in the possible scenario of a second wave of COVID-19
- 1.9. The special effects and associated audio soundtrack will then reflect the strengths and diversity of London's population, communities and culture, aiming to galvanise Londoners, increasing their confidence in the city as a centre of progression and equality, whilst also increasing the reputation of the city as such to the rest of the UK and overseas audiences.
- 1.10. NYE 2020 represents a move away from a central London firework display to a more sustainable event that can be activated across the city.
- 1.11. Planning for this alternative event must consider the risks associated with potential crowds gathering to celebrate New Year's Eve regardless of the change to the delivery model. Any form of NYE event in London is a complex multi-agency major event and as such core to the planning will be to mitigate this through public communications but also to work with the multiple key stakeholders to ensure that they are satisfied with the 'in the sky' plans to minimise and mitigate for on-site staffing and infrastructure, particularly at locations synonymous with New Year's Eve in London.
- 1.12. Planning will also consider any impacts of COVID-19 on partner agencies, stakeholders and suppliers in providing both infrastructure and staff.
- 1.13. The scale of uncertainty that COVID-19 presents, especially in relation to the organiser's ability to actively engage, understand, and build relationships to deliver a mutually acceptable event plan, with over 50 complex stakeholder groups, while mitigating crowd management risks and concerns, within a five-month period, means that the incumbent event producer, Jack Morton Worldwide (JMW), is the only viable delivery partner if we wish to deliver an event to mark New Year's Eve in 2020. JMW has delivered the event for the last 16 years and has the unique experience to deliver this complex event in the exceptional and unprecedented circumstances of the current year. This expertise in regard to the previous event, will enable them to create the new proposals whilst fully understanding and addressing the concerns the key agencies will raise.
- 1.14. It is proposed that JMW be contracted without competitive tender, requiring an exemption from normal procurement processes under the provisions in Section 10.1 of the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code, notably that JMW's previous involvement in this project cannot be separated from the requirements for delivering this revised event safely. This is on the basis that:
 - any contractor undertaking this work needs to have expert understanding of the previous event, its integration with the complexity of the city operations on New Year's Eve and be able to fully and quickly assess the risks and impacts associated with the changes being made;
 - of particular importance is the detailed understanding of the potential for, and the likely impacts of, crowd build up at key locations on the night. The specific knowledge held by JMW is essential to present viable mitigating plans within the complex stakeholder environment. It is of critical importance to the project that minimal crowd management be required and therefore this detailed knowledge and experience of the previous plans is fundamental to the safe delivery of the revised New Year's Eve event;
 - to be able to assess and mitigate the impact on core stakeholders and agencies who will still be under pressure from the consequences of COVID-19, there needs to be certainty that the contractor fully understand, and be able to deliver to, the requirements of the key statutory agencies involved. JMW has built up these relationships and is trusted by the key stakeholders

and agencies. Key stakeholders, including the Metropolitan Police Service, have highlighted that for this event to be delivered safely on New Year's Eve in London, they have a strong preference that JMW be contracted to plan and deliver the event. There is a significant risk that agencies will not support plans made without JMW's detailed knowledge of New Year's Eve in London;

- COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the events industry and the contractor needs to be able to guarantee the delivery and resilience of their resources to deliver the event within the context of the unique nature of New Year's Eve in London. A new contractor would bring additional risk through lack of knowledge of city operations on New Year's Eve; and
- delaying the planning for this event further, pending any clarity on revised government and Public Health England advice, actively increases the risk involved in delivery of the event as this will reduce time for the required safe planning of the project.

1.15. Throughout the work, JMW will monitor and review the feasibility of all elements of the event, to identify issues which may affect the delivery in the context of the ongoing COVID-19 situation. The planning period will also need to be led by the importance of not adding additional pressures to the essential services who are focusing their services towards mitigating the impacts of the virus.

1.16. The planning and development phase will look at the impact of the following:

- government advice and requirements around social distancing and other preventative measures;
- the capacity of the major stakeholders to participate in the planning process and the required actions to gain their agreement to the event proceeding; and
- supply chain capacity to deliver as required, including challenges on time, availability of resources, cost differences to 'standard' services and products.

1.17. Under the contract, JMW will be responsible for delivering the requirements for the event including all creative installations and development, provision of infrastructure, stewarding, crowd management, event management planning and contingency planning, including in-depth liaison with local authorities, agencies, business and residents and other stakeholders involved or impacted in delivering this event.

1.18. Consistent with the requirements set out in existing TfL 93509 framework contracts, event plans developed by JMW will be scrutinised first by the GLA Events team and then by the Licensing, Operations and Safety Planning Group (LOSPG), to ensure the plans meet standards required by key agencies, stakeholders and London boroughs.

1.19. The contract with JMW will be managed and monitored by the GLA Events team throughout its duration, with regular and frequent review meetings to ensure the core message and priorities of the project are being achieved. The GLA will retain ultimate decision making for any and all significant creative, messaging and delivery options for the event, and officers of the Events team will play an active role in formal stakeholder liaison meetings.

1.20. The contract monitoring process will include challenge of sub-contractor procurement to ensure value for money is being achieved, benchmarking costs where possible.

1.21. For delivery of the 2021 event to mark New Year's Eve, we are proposing to start market engagement in Autumn 2020, to ensure that Framework suppliers have a fair and realistic ability to effectively engage in the procurement process.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

2.1. The key objectives for the New Year's Eve event are to:

- galvanise Londoners behind a core values statement, which generates optimism and positive public support for London as a centre of progression and equality during its recovery; and
- promote London nationally and internationally as a global city, strengthening its reputation across the UK and overseas, and raising confidence to visit, study and do business in London, thereby supporting economic recovery.

- 2.2. Attainment of the above objectives will be monitored and measured through pre- and post-event market research, as well as through levels and analysis of local, national and international media coverage.
- 2.3. The tone of the event will be very important, and whilst there should be an element of reflection to the COVID-19 pandemic over the last year, the focus needs to also be uplifting with a message of hope and looking to the future. Clearly the status of COVID-19 and the national mood in December is difficult to predict at this point, and therefore we should monitor and adapt our messaging where required.

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
 - advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 3.2. The creative and production elements of London NYE will include the aim to celebrate London's diversity and helping to foster good relations between communities.
- 3.3. The contract with JMW will seek to ensure diversity and representation are embedded throughout the project delivery, and within the creative options for the show.
- 3.4. An access assessment will be carried out and will seek the input of independent disability access specialists. As the event will be designed solely for broadcast it is anticipated that the access requirements will be predominantly focused on communications and the show presentation.

4. Other considerations

Risks and mitigation

Risk	Mitigation
Planning without specific guidance from Government/PHE	In the current situation, public health regulations may change with little notice. It is therefore not possible to plan a major event such as this with certainty and therefore assumptions will need to be made as a basis for planning.
Proposed event is not deliverable despite planning due to further wave of pandemic	There is a risk, that society and essential services may continue to be impacted by COVID-19 and have such an impact that strict control measures are reintroduced, such that the revised NYE event is not deliverable. For example, if only essential travel is permitted then installations of the lighting/SFX would not be classed as essential travel for the workers to put in place. Recent public statements by the Prime Minister suggest that this scenario is not expected.

Capacity of essential services to support	Continuous review of feasibility will highlight challenges of capacity and identify appropriate mitigating actions.
Negative reputation, resulting from lack of public event	Development of marketing and messaging campaign to carry key messages including narrative of why the changes are being made. This will need to develop as the time goes on, to better reflect the mood depending on the status of social distancing etc. Should the restrictions not be as severe and more free movement and socialising be possible then messaging will change accordingly.

Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

4.1. The New Year's Eve event will directly link to:

- COVID-19 commemoration/recovery as appropriate;
- *City for all Londoners*: making London a fairer and more tolerant city open and accessible to all, and one in which we can all live and prosper free from prejudice. Enabling all Londoners to benefit from the city's fantastic arts and culture;
- culture strategy: the Mayor will continue to fund festivals and events with an emphasis on more community involvement, increasing quality, raising profile and increasing volunteering;
- *Inclusive London* - the Mayor's equality, diversity and inclusion strategy: To celebrate London's rich diversity and bring communities together through a series of high profile accessible and inclusive events and campaigns;
- *All of Us* - strategy for social integration: using sport, volunteering, arts and culture as powerful tools for social integration; establishing London's reputation as a welcoming city for newcomers from other parts of the UK and abroad, with opportunities to feel a strong connection and positive sense of belonging to the city in which they are living.

4.2. Extensive consultation will need to take place with all operational agencies including but not limited to MPS, TfL, British Transport Police, London Ambulance Service, London Fire Brigade, Westminster City Council, City of London Corporation, The Royal Parks, London Borough of Lambeth and London Borough of Southwark.

4.3. Consultation will also be carried out by the event production company as part of their delivery role with all residents and business affected by the event, and the outcome of all such consultation will be factored into the delivery of the event as appropriate.

4.4. There are no conflicts of interest to note for any of the officers involved in the drafting or clearance of this decision form.

5. Financial comments

5.1. Mayoral approval is sought for expenditure of up to £1.5 million in financial year 2020-21, to deliver a New Year's Eve event on 31 December 2020 as detailed in this MD. Approval is also sought for a related exemption from the requirement of the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code to procure and enter into a contract, without competitive tender, with Jack Morton Worldwide to scope and deliver the New Year's Eve 2020 event.

5.2. The expenditure will be funded from the 2020-21 New Year's Eve budget and will be incurred in financial year 2020-21. The New Year's Eve funding available has been reduced from the amount approved within the Events for London programme budget, and included in MD2619 GLA Budget for 2020-21, by £1.25m following the savings exercise to repurpose the budget.

- 5.3. Previous NYE events were further funded by income raised from ticket sales and food & beverage concessions, but this income will not be achievable in 2020.
- 5.4. Expenditure up to £1.5m is proposed to be spent as outlined in the following table:

Income	Amount (£)
Baseline allocated budget (reduced)	1,500,000
TOTAL	1,500,000
Expenditure	Amount (£)
Event production (JMW contract)	1,250,000
Other operational costs	70,000
Marketing	80,000
Contingency	100,000
TOTAL	1,500,000

6. Legal comments

- 6.1. The decisions requested of the Mayor concern the exercise of the GLA's general powers, falling within the GLA's statutory powers to do such things considered to further or which are facilitative of, conducive or incidental to the promotion of social development and the improvement of the environment in Greater London; and in formulating the proposals in respect of which a decision is sought officers have complied with the Authority's related statutory duties to:
- pay due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people;
 - consider how the proposals will promote the improvement of health of persons, health inequalities between persons and to contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom; and
 - consult with appropriate bodies.
- 6.2. In taking the decisions requested, the Mayor 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 and foster good relations 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 (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). To this end, the Mayor should have particular regard to section 3 (above) of this report.
- 6.3. An exemption from the requirements of the Authority's Contracts and Funding Code may be made where the service provider has previous involvement in a specific current project or there is a need for the continuation of existing work that cannot be separated from the new project. The officers have set out at paragraphs 1.11 to 1.17 how the requirements for each exemption have been met.
- 6.4. It is possible that certain highways will need to be closed to vehicular and pedestrian traffic (with exceptions) for the purposes of the maintaining public safety on New Year's Eve, through Traffic Regulation Orders made under section 16A of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
- 6.5. The GLA is not the highway or traffic authority for the highways in question. It is understood that the GLA will seek formal consent of TfL and the highway authorities for the roads in question to be closed.
- 6.6. The balance of the legal comments appears in part 2 of this decision form.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Initial stakeholder engagement session hosted by GLA	July 2020
Approval of this MD	July 2020
Single Source Request submitted	July 2020
Single Source Request approval	August 2020
Appointment of event production company	August 2020
Commence detailed planning for NYE	August 2020
Evaluation start and finish (self/external)	August 2020 – January 2021
Public announcement	TBC
Delivery End Date	January 2021
Project Closure:	February 2021

Appendices and supporting papers:

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? YES**

If YES, for what reason:

- a) JMW need to provide detailed cost proposal to finalise the contract so should not be informed of the total budget available before this is done; and
- b) Invitation to tender for future NYE events is intended to be released before the end of 2020, and release of information within this MD may jeopardise this competitive process.

Until what date: 04 January 2021

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 - YES

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Drafting officer to confirm the following (✓)

Drafting officer:

John Benton has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Sponsoring Director:

Niran Mothada has reviewed the request and is satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.

✓

Mayoral Adviser:

Leah Kreitzman has been consulted about the proposal and agrees the recommendations.

✓

Advice:

The Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal.

✓

Corporate Investment Board

This decision was agreed by the Corporate Investment Board on 20 July 2020.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES:

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

Signature

Date

D. Gove

22 July 2020

CHIEF OF STAFF:

I am satisfied that this is an appropriate request to be submitted to the Mayor

Signature

Date

D. Bellamy

21 July 2020

