GREATER**LONDON**AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR MAYORAL DECISION – MD2920

Title: London Datastore Site Rebuild

Executive summary:

The GLA has conducted a review of the London Datastore platform. It has concluded that investment is required to ensure the platform can fulfil the Mayor of London's ambition for a city data-sharing platform that enables public sector agencies to collaborate, and to quickly and securely share private and open data, to support data-driven policymaking and services for London.

We have conducted a discovery exercise to inform the London Datastore strategy, and a product definition exercise that has informed the form and functionality of the proposed new website.

This decision form seeks approval for expenditure of up to £500,000 to build a new city data-sharing platform that better meets the needs of users, and to ensure that we can improve the platform iteratively to meet future needs.

Decision:

That the Mayor:

    i.   approves expenditure of up to £500,000 in financial years 2021-22 to 2024-25 on the specialist professional support needed to rebuild the London Datastore platform as set out in this decision form

    ii.   delegates authority to the Executive Director of Strategy and Communications to approve proposals for the specifics of such expenditure.

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: 19/1/22

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

Decision required – supporting report

1.   Introduction and background

1.1   The London Datastore is the GLA's data-sharing platform. It has approximately 150,000 users each month and is home to more than 6,000 datasets. It was originally launched in 2010 to promote greater civic transparency and accountability; it was developed as a tool to publish GLA-held datasets and allow the public to hold the Mayor and the GLA to account. The platform's success has earned it a strong reputation internationally – it won the Open Data Institute's (ODI's) Open Data Publisher Award in 2015 – and contributed to the recognition of London as a world leader in the field of city data.

1.2   Demands on the Datastore have since outgrown its original scope considerably, which now endeavours to support a growing number of data services that are essential to planning and decision making across the city. With the adoption of Internet of Things (IoT) sensors we have a growing demand for live feeds of data shared through the Datastore; a change from the static tables of data in a CSV or Excel format.

1.3   Policy makers at the GLA increasingly see the value in sharing data of all kinds to address city priorities through joint data projects with London boroughs, the private sector, the research community and civil society. This includes open data, sensor data, and data that may be 'non-open' because of commercial or privacy characteristics. For example:

- City Hall's Coronavirus Hub was viewed over 5 million times in 9 months – or 20,000 times a day – providing a trusted source of information during the pandemic.

- The Cultural Infrastructure Map charts thousands of London's venues such as theatres, museums and recording studios and is a vital resource for those looking to protect, grow and make use of our cultural facilities.

- The Infrastructure Mapping Application allows over 26 utilities and public authorities to share private data on street works and better target investment and minimise disruption by coordinating street-works, with eight completed joint street-works schemes saving at least 4269 days of disruption on the road network, £800k in direct construction cost savings and up to £3.9m in wider social value benefit.

- The new Planning Datahub for the first time delivers a live data feed of development proposals in London from boroughs and applicants and is the most advanced planning data service in the country. The live feed now holds data on over 458,000 development proposals (and increasing daily) from London's 34 planning authorities.

- In June the GLA launched the innovative and multi-award nominated High Streets Data Service working with 21 boroughs to understand how spending and movement patterns have been impacted by the pandemic and the lockdown across the capital's 600 high streets.

- The Green Infrastructure Map is a London-wide map identifying how much of London is covered by trees, plants and open water across the entire city, to help London's decision-makers identify where green improvements and investments might be best targeted, and what kind of interventions might be most useful for the needs of neighbourhoods.

1.4   A peer review against the Digital Service Standard in 2018 highlighted the inability to iterate and improve the website as a significant limitation, especially considering the new use cases above. In its current form, the Datastore is difficult to integrate with other systems and this will continue to limit its ability to be at the heart of London's data ecosystem. This lack of flexibility can lead to large investments needed to be made outside of the Datastore into parallel systems.

1.5   The London Datastore can play a pivotal role in enabling the city to collaborate and join up the city's data. Our discovery with the ODI in late 2019 (ADD2358) confirmed the platform should pivot to provide a central registry of the city's data, making discovery of data or analysis easier, rather than attempting to be a huge 'data lake' of all city data. Our public sector agencies need to be able to work together, and to quickly and securely share private and open data, including live feed data, in order to support data-driven policymaking and services for London. This 'federated' approach reflects the how London government (the GLA, major agencies and 33 boroughs) works in practice.

1.6   ADD2482 approved the commission of external services to undertake a product definition exercise to turn the high-level needs identified by the ODI into a set of defined functional requirements, a product development backlog and a delivery roadmap. This work was completed in September 2021 and its outputs, including the documentation of technology solutions and resource requirements, will be used to inform the procurement of a platform build partner. The functional requirements and high-level delivery roadmap will inform how we progress the development work.

2.   Objectives and expected outcomes

Objectives

2.1   The London Datastore will be rebuilt so we own the intellectual property and have the freedom to develop the software in a way that better meets the needs of the organisation and partners. The build of the new city data-sharing platform for London has three main objectives:

- to be a better source of data and a destination for insights; as a central register of London's data, the modular design will enable easier access to key datasets, analysis, models and visualisations, as well as vastly improved functionality

- to enable the delivery of data and data services within agreed frameworks, standards and values relating to security, governance and inclusion

- to enable greater collaboration (both internally and externally), including convening communities of interest to use data in solving the city's challenges.

Outcomes

2.2   The new city data-sharing platform for London will increase effectiveness by making our processes much more efficient (for example, enhanced evidence bases and performance monitoring), and the delivery of data services much more cost-effective. It will give greater discoverability, ownership and control over the data; and greatly improve user experience and uptake. The new platform will accelerate work to use data to solve city challenges by removing some of the barriers to data sharing.

2.3   The anticipated breakdown of the work, across financial years of 2021-22 to 2024-25, is as follows:

Timeline	Activity	Spend
January – March 2022	Build procurement and supplier onboarding	
April 2022 – March 2023	Build to minimum viable product	£350,000
April 2023 – March 2024	Phase two functionality and improvements	£130,000
April 2024 – March 2025	Wrap-up and contingency	£20,000

3.   Equality comments

3.1 The aim of the new city data-sharing platform is to help solve the city's challenges by putting data in the hands of those who can make a positive difference. Data, insights and evidence are at the heart of good policymaking, and central to enabling the GLA to meet our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty.

3.2 The website redesign and new functionality will support the aims of the Mayor's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, in actively reducing barriers to accessing digital services for people with accessibility needs and will ensure content from the GLA is as inclusive as possible. This work will enhance the GLA's reputation as a provider of accessible services by ensuring the new London Datastore caters for all users.

4. Other considerations

Key risks and issues

4.1 The London Datastore has outgrown its scope and is proving an inefficient tool in many situations for policy officers, the City Intelligence Unit, and external partners aiming to do their jobs efficiently and effectively. Our inability to iterate and improve the Datastore, or to integrate it with other systems, are significant limitations. Lack of investment in this core platform may result in the need to invest in parallel systems in order to deliver required insights.

Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

4.2 The Mayor has a published commitment build a new city data-sharing platform to be the central register linking data across our city; and to work closely with boroughs, through the new London Office of Technology and Innovation and the private sector, to join up data on projects to serve the public and support our recovery programmes.

4.3 There are no conflicts of interest to note for any of those involved in the drafting or clearance of the decision.

5. Financial comments

5.1 Approval is sought for the expenditure of up to £500,000 in financial years 2021-22 to 2024-25 on specialist professional support needed to build a new city data-sharing platform, as set out in this decision form.

5.2 Capital expenditure will be incurred approximately as set out in paragraph 2.3 above. This expenditure will be funded from London Datastore capital budget of £500,000 that is currently planned for in the capital strategy. The profile of the capital budget will be adjusted to reflect the table in paragraph 2.3, above, as part of 2022-23 budget setting process. Any further funding will be subject to the GLA's approval and budget setting process. This work and budget will be managed by the London Datastore Team, within the City Intelligence Unit, Strategy and Communication Directorate.

6. Legal comments

6.1. The foregoing sections of this report indicate that:

- 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 that are facilitative of, conducive or incidental to the promotion of economic development and wealth creation in Greater London

- in formulating the proposals in respect of which a decision is sought, officers have complied with the Authority's related statutory duties to:

  o pay due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people

  o 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

  o 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) and persons who do not (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 If the Mayor is minded to make the decisions sought, officers must ensure that the services and/or supplies required are procured in liaison with TfL Procurement and in accordance with the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code and contracts are put in place between and executed by the GLA and contractors before commencement of such services and/or supplies.

6.4 The Mayor may delegate authority to the Executive Director of Strategy and Communications as proposed should he wish.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

7.1 Project sponsorship is provided by Theo Blackwell, Chief Digital Officer for London. The London Datastore Product Manager will manage the project, working closely with colleagues from the City Intelligence Unit, Digital team and Technology Group.

Activity	Timeline
Tender sent out	January 2022
Proposals received/decision communicated	March 2022
Design and build start date	April 2022
Project closure – design and build complete	March 2025

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 <u>or</u> 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 the 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: Christine Wingfield 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: Theo Blackwell 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 10 January 2022	✓

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES:

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

Signature	Date
D. Gane	11/1/22

CHIEF OF STAFF:

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

Signature	Date
D. Bellamy	13/1/22