

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2203

Title: Meanwhile Use and Affordable Workspace

Executive Summary:

Following endorsement by the LEAP Programme Board on 12 October 2017, approval is sought from the Executive Director of Development, Enterprise and Environment to award £25,000 of grant funding, from the LEAP Strategies Budget, to the Centre for London. The grant would support its work exploring meanwhile use and also a study on the provision, management and safeguarding of affordable workspace.

The studies support the LEAP's priority of mainstreaming entrepreneurship; and it is considered that this grant for what is existing planned work will – by avoiding commissioning new and potentially duplicate research – represent value for money.

Although expenditure is at Assistant Director Decision level, approval is being sought from the Executive Director of Development, Enterprise and Environment as budget holder.

Decision:

That the Executive Director of Development, Enterprise and Environment approves expenditure of £25,000 by way of grant funding to the Centre for London to support a study exploring meanwhile use and affordable workspace.

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: Fiona Fletcher-Smith

Position: Executive Director Development, Enterprise and Environment.

Signature:



Date:

16/02/18.

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

At the LEAP Board meeting on 28 June 2017, Members signed off a range of proposals that would support the overarching priority of “mainstreaming entrepreneurship” through three key areas of ‘people’, ‘connectivity’ and ‘space’. Focusing on the latter of these three themes, the following specific actions were agreed by LEAP:

- i) Explore ways to formalise the emerging workspace provider sector, encouraging more consistent monitoring of value, both social and economic.
- ii) Facilitate joint working between local authorities (and other public sector players) to pool information on available, publicly owned space which could be used for co-working, meanwhile or move-on space.
- iii) Research to explore viability of more flexible leases and convening of key stakeholders
- iv) Commission work to help develop a better understanding of what is genuinely affordable workspace for particular sectors or business stages

In order to avoid duplication and maximise the available funding, we have reviewed current planned research in this area and have identified 2 relevant research pieces being developed by Centre for London, in partnership with the London Workspace Providers Board (an advisory body to the GLA) that will deliver against the second and fourth action outlined above. Centre for London have secured a consortium of partners to fund these two separate pieces of work, which are both below £25k. It is therefore proposed that LEAP provides grant funding towards these pieces of research rather than commissioning potentially duplicative activity and also reducing the overall costs of funding the research separately, without the LEAPs input neither of the research pieces could progress or would be significantly delayed.

2. Issues for consideration

Meanwhile Use

The proposed Meanwhile Use research will explore the many different types of Meanwhile Space, its potential to support inclusive growth and increase the availability of workspace in the capital, including investigating the following areas.

- A. Is there a need for greater flexibility in the planning system to support meanwhile uses that last more than 28 days, which currently require full planning permission.
- B. How to strike the correct balance between encouraging meanwhile use whilst being sensitive to the impact large scale meanwhile use can have on local neighbourhoods.
- C. What are the existing business models of meanwhile use in terms of site rent and profits generated by use, are public land owners getting the best deal when entering into meanwhile use arrangements.
- D. What role can meanwhile use play in providing space for artists and creative uses. Is the creation of temporary artist studios a sustainable solution to concerns around availability of space for creatives.

- E. Are there measures in place to manage the transition of successful meanwhile uses into permanent developments.

Affordable workspace

The proposed affordable workspace research will look at future models for the provision, management and safeguarding of non-residential space in mixed developments, the following areas will be included in the research.

- A. Who are the key players in delivering new ways of providing mixed use residential projects, and what are their successful methods.
- B. How successful have borough-led, GLA/LEAP funded and privately-led employment focused projects been and what lessons can be drawn from that.
- C. What new approaches and organisational models should be explored to accelerate and scale the delivery of successful non-residential space.
- D. What additional funding could be leveraged in to create more and better outcomes. What do these funders require and what are their barriers.
- E. How should the GLA and boroughs participate to support the development of the outcomes and institutions.
- F. The impact the adoption of new approaches would have.

3. Objectives and expected outcomes

This research project - informed by interviews, and in depth and nuanced case studies - will synthesise the lessons of recent policy and practice, and propose ways to provide, manage and safeguard affordable workspaces for a changing economy.

The overall research findings and recommendations will challenge, inspire and enable the GLA, local government, housing associations, developers and funding bodies to take a more active, strategic and focused approach to providing and managing workspace.

The work will directly support the LEAP's priorities for enterprise and entrepreneurship and the Mayor's vision for the future of London's economy, as outlined in his draft Economic Development Strategy. As a range of different types of workspace will be needed to accommodate the growth in London's businesses, the Mayor wants to ensure there is adequate businesses space at competitive rents across the capital and this research will directly support this objective.

4. Equality comments

These proposals seek to identify mechanisms for workspace to be made more accessible to underrepresented groups with shared protected characteristics (e.g age, sex, race and disability) as set out in the Equality Act 2010, as well as those from lower income groups and the unemployed.

All activity will be developed and delivered in compliance with relevant Codes of Practice and in line with the requirements of the public-sector equality duty to ensure that steps are taken to minimise disadvantages suffered by people who share a protected characteristic. Age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, gender, religion or belief, sexual orientation. The following specific issues have been considered

- i) Documents and publications: all documents produced will comply with Mayor of London branding guidelines, it being based on guidance from the Royal National Institute of Blind People. Where possible accessible formats will be available.

5. Other considerations

a) Key risks and issues

The main risk is reputational, by not funding research pieces which help support London's Start-up/SME sector then the Mayor is at risk of not following up on the promises set out in his election manifesto.

b) Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

This research underpins the key Mayoral priority of being the most pro-business Mayor ever. As set out in his draft Economic Development Strategy and through the London Plan the "Mayor will help start-ups and small businesses to grow by promoting access to affordable workspace, finance and business support". This research will support the objectives outlined in the "affordable workspace and low-cost business space" section of the Economic Development Strategy that: "the Mayor will work with the boroughs and other stakeholders to support the retention and development of affordable workspace – by developing planning policy on affordable workspace and low cost business space".

6. Financial comments

The proposed grant of up to £25,000 to the Centre of London will be funded from the LEAP Strategies budget for 2017-18.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Delivery Start Date	Following funding approval
Delivery End Date	01/06/2018
Project Closure:	01/06/2018

Appendices and supporting papers:

Appendix 1 - Project specification

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? 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:**Drafting officer:**

Richard Cumbers has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms that the Finance and –if relevant– Legal teams have commented on this proposal as required, and this decision reflects their comments.

Corporate Investment Board:

The Corporate Investment Board reviewed this proposal on 12 February 2018.

HEAD OF FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE:

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

Signature:



Date:

13-02-18

