

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR DIRECTOR DECISION – DD2306

Title: Good Growth by Design – Adapting high streets – Research

Executive Summary:

Approval is sought for revenue funding of up to £80,000 for a research study to inform the development on the High Streets Investment Strategy. The standalone research will be funded by the research strand of the Good Growth Fund. The research study will define a suite of approaches and actions that can be brought together as a programme of place-based strategies to enable the ongoing resilience of the city's high streets.

Decision:

That the Executive Director of Development, Enterprise and Environment approves:

Expenditure of up to £80,000 on external services to undertake the high streets evidence-based study.

AUTHORISING DIRECTOR

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: Lucy Owen

Position: Interim Executive Director -
Development, Enterprise and
Environment

Signature:



Date:

20.12.18

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 MD2163 approved up to £6.088m in revenue support funding for the Good Growth Fund. Good Growth Fund revenue support funding is targeted at building a balanced programme with the specific aim of ensuring that the range of objectives set out in the prospectus are achieved across London's geography. Three categories of support are identified to support the development of a balanced programme and this research will sit under (b) Research and Evidence base:
- a) **Development Funding** - to provide Good Growth Fund applicants (and prospective applicants) with support in meeting their project design and development costs including feasibility, viability, business planning and commercial/property advice to demonstrate need, improve quality and shape and influence the delivery of targeted outcomes, with a view to submitting a full funding bid down the line;
 - b) **Research and Evidence base** - to support a series of research commissions which inform and influence the direction and emphasis of funding calls over the lifetime of the programme; and
 - c) **Due Diligence** — to support the GLA in undertaking technical assessment of grant funding and loan applications. This will include advice on property, valuation, cost/value for money and sustainability.
- 1.2 The Mayor published 'High Streets for All'¹ last October. This strategic narrative drew on LEAP funding to explore and establish the economic, social and environmental value of high streets from the perspective of Londoners and to highlight the significant challenges high streets and town centres currently face. The report sets out the potential role of the public, private and third sector in supporting the future success of high streets and town centres. It makes ten recommendations to help high streets and town centre stakeholders deliver inclusive, shared and locally-responsive growth. Specifically, the study sought ways to promote the inclusive and diverse nature of London's high streets, so that Londoners can improve their economic and social well-being and participate in shaping the future of their city.
- 1.3 The Mayor has put in place a range of strategies and policies to promote inclusive economic growth, social value, social integration, cultural engagement and a diverse range of uses across London's network of town centres and high streets which are accessible to support this research. However, it is now necessary to build on the evidence base represented by 'High Streets for All' and to identify a suite of supportable activities that can begin to address the issues identified.
- 1.4 The research sits under the Good Growth by Design (GGbD) programme, which identified a number of design inquiries to both inform policy, guidance and delivery and to set quality standards for others to follow. GGbD is the Mayor's programme to promote quality and inclusion in the built environment. It is a plan and a call to action to deliver good growth. This work is being taken forward as part of the 'intensification and mix' Good Growth by Design research strand.
- 1.5 The research will identify approaches to place-based interventions that will have pan London relevance and will consider the broad-range of Good Growth Fund challenges. These challenges include developing civic infrastructure, backing small business, securing and creating workspace, crafting a smarter city, intensifying London's local economies, building skills and employability, and delivering community-led regeneration.

¹ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/high_streets_for_all_report_web_final.pdf

- 1.6 The funding has been agreed in principle by the LEAP programme board on the 6th of December 2018.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1 The research will set out current and emerging challenges and opportunities created by local social, economic and environmental conditions in a number of London's high streets. This will include developing an understanding of the rapidly changing dynamics of much of the retail sector, as well as the similar shifts in the public sector, in commercial space and employment, in housing, mobility and public realm, and addressing the high street in this context.
- 2.2 It will identify specific study, testing innovative strategies on real life London locations, chosen for their representativeness of a range of London high street conditions, through various forms of design research. Cases from elsewhere, nationally and internationally, will be evaluated, translated and brought to bear to help form a reference framework.
- 2.3 We believe that London's high streets will continue to evolve, as they always have. The question is the direction in which they could evolve and the implications for the various stakeholders. This means asking core social and economic questions, about the function of the high street, the value it produces for its boroughs and the wider city, and exploring a range of innovative actions, strategies and methods that could better unlock good growth for London.
- 2.4 The delivery partners, supported by consultants as necessary, will consider how best to address challenges, implement actions and record success in response to the 'High Streets for All' report. They will also develop an evaluation methodology for former and future high street investment streams.
- 2.5 The research will develop the following activities:
- Restate and develop the case for high streets. Highlighting the intrinsic economic, social, cultural, environmental and spatial characteristics of high streets, and new ways of thinking about their value.
 - Identify the current/emerging trends, challenges and opportunities, across the sectors and areas, including developing an understanding of the rapidly changing dynamics of much of the retail sector.
 - Identify specific interventions and wider strategies looking at cases from elsewhere, nationally and internationally to help form a reference framework
 - Conduct design research, ensuring the interventions/strategies identified can be easily applied to real life London Locations
- 2.6 In parallel to this research commission, an evaluation approach to high streets will also be developed. It will look back to previous high streets projects and provide lessons learned for future high streets investments.
- 2.6 Expected outcomes of the research:

Outcome 1: Provide clear guidance and strategy that can inform the future good growth investments and support partners across the city to deliver projects and innovative models that will help deliver the Mayor's vision for London's economic growth and social value.

- Cases from elsewhere, nationally and internationally, will be evaluated, translated and brought to bear to help form a reference framework.
- Develop guidelines and actions linked to a high-level implementation strategy

Outcome 2: Enhance the economic, social and environmental performance of high streets across London

- Secure and identify the most valid and appropriated method for accessing and analysing data regarding the performance of high streets
- Explore the use of technology to aid and support the overall programme
- Develop a range of innovative approaches for up to 6 specific town centre high streets chosen for their representativeness of a range of London high street conditions. These approaches will seek to deliver an uplift in economic activity and social value in respective locations and indirectly in high street location across London.

Outcome 3: Equip Boroughs to understand issues around high streets and take on new strategies.

- Identify and test, through various forms of design research, different approaches and activities designed to significantly improve the 6 specific high streets locations.
- Develop guidance to support all boroughs and other agencies to develop high streets and town centre strategies.

Outcome 4: Increase and enhance the knowledge base and data held by the GLA and other agencies

- Implement new London plan policy framework (SD6-SD9) for town centres and high streets, and work in partnership with the planning team to increase support.
- Develop an evaluation methodology for high streets

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. The work set out in this decision is intended to inform high streets future investment strategies and its ambitions to ensure that public space in London is accessible for all residents, workers and visitors to the area. It will consider how high streets are used by a diverse population considering the relevant protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act.
- 3.2. The draft London Plan has had a full integrated impact assessment undertaken. The D7 draft London Plan policy on public realm and the Good Growth by Design agenda of this policy statement and guidance aims to improve the design and environment quality of the built environment for all Londoners.
- 3.3. The sounding board group, which is cross cutting across the GLA, are advising on the procurement specification to ensure equalities and diversity are considered and that consideration has been given to the potential impact on those with protected characteristics.
- 3.4. All publications will be produced in accessible formats.

4. Other considerations

Key risks and issues:

- 4.1 The increasing concerns about the future of high streets of London councils and other bodies need to be addressed as part of this research, as well as their requirements in terms of regeneration strategies.

Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities:

- 4.2 The Mayor's manifesto includes the following pledges relevant to high streets:
 - a) Support communities which want to keep the character of high streets intact;

b) Prioritise the improvement of high streets, squares and public spaces across the city including outer London and inner London;

4.3 The draft new London Plan proposes measures of support through the planning system. It takes a strong first approach, focusing commercial development in town centres. It supports the diversification of uses in town centres and requires boroughs to put in place town centre strategies. SD6 SD9

5. Financial comments

5.1 In total this project will cost up to £80,000 and will be funded from two sources. The cost of up to £60,000 for this project would be funded from the £6.088 million revenue funding allocated as part of the overall Good Growth Fund total of £61.095 million in MD 2163. This total for revenue funding has been identified for expenditure on costs to support applicants in the development of their project proposals and to provide for associated operational expenditure and programme support costs to enable the delivery of the programme. Included within the revenue funding total for the Good Growth Fund is a specific indicative allocation for research of £240,000. This project would meet the definition of research to be funded from this budget and sufficient funding is available.

5.2 The remaining £20,000 cost of the project will be funded from an existing budget available within the Regeneration and Economic Development team's High Street Fund. This element of funding will be used to support the development of a related evaluation approach and lessons learned from previous high street projects.

6. Legal comments

6.1 The foregoing sections of this report indicate that the decisions requested of the director fall within the statutory powers of the Authority to promote and/or to do anything which is facilitative of or conducive or incidental to economic development and wealth creation within 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:

- (a) pay due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people;
- (b) 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
- (c) consult with appropriate bodies.

6.2 In taking the decisions requested of her, the director 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 director should have particular regard to section 3 (above) of this report.

6.3 Officers must ensure that the services require for the high streets study be procured in accordance with the Authority's Contracts and Funding Code (the "Code") and with the assistance of Transport for London's procurement team. Furthermore, officers must ensure that appropriate contractual documentation be executed by both the Authority and the relevant contractor prior to the commencement of the required services.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

The next steps following consideration by the Board are summarised below:

Activity	Timeline
Any subsequent approvals - DD	December 2018
Adup Procurement process	January 2018
Interviews, contract	January 2019
Inception meeting, research, related interventions and lessons learned	Feb-March 2019
Place based activities	Feb-May2019
Physical report production	June-July 2019
Final publication	July 2019
Launch & Project Closure	July 2019

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:

We wish to defer publication until the consultant has been appointed for the commission to avoid prejudicing competition during the tender process.

Until what date: February 2019

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 – NO

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Drafting officer to confirm the following (✓)

Drafting officer:

Mathilde Lebreton has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following: ✓

Assistant Director/Head of Service:

Assistant Director, Debbie Jackson has reviewed the documentation and is satisfied for it to be referred to the Sponsoring Director for approval. ✓

Financial and Legal advice:

The Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal, and this decision reflects their comments. ✓

Corporate Investment Board

This decision was agreed by the Corporate Investment Board on 17 December 2018

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES:

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

Signature

M. D. Alqa

Date

17.12.18

