

REQUEST FOR DIRECTOR DECISION – DD2585

Title: High Streets for All Challenge – Stage 3 Round 2 funding

Executive summary:

The High Streets for All (HSFA) Challenge is a key programme within the HSFA recovery mission. From 2021-22 to 2022-23 it provides £4.085m of strategic enabling funding, targeted advice and knowledge-sharing opportunities, to support the development of exemplar high-street projects in each London borough.

The HSFA Challenge invites local partnerships to bring forward and co-design innovative high-street recovery strategies and proposals. Each strategy can address common and local challenges, and underpin the public reimaging of high streets and town centres across London. Strategies can support actions across an entire high street, or focus on an innovative exemplar high-street recovery project.

The Mayor (under cover of MD2901 – High Streets for All Challenge – Allocation and expenditure for 2021-23) delegated authority to the Executive Director Good Growth to approve remaining detailed funding allocations to successful applications in accordance with established principles and priorities. This decision form seeks approval to provide £1.059m of grant funding to contribute to the costs of delivery of the seven exemplar third-party projects set out in this report.

Decision:

That the Executive Director Good Growth approves expenditure of £1.059m to provide grant funding as a contribution to the costs of delivery of the seven exemplar third-party projects set out at Appendix A to this report.

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: Philip Graham

Position: Executive Director, Good Growth

Signature:



Date:

5 July 2022

PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. The High Streets for All (HSFA) mission is one of nine missions approved by the London Recovery Board in September 2020 to respond to the recovery grand challenge of “restoring confidence in the city, minimising the impact on London’s communities and building back better the city’s economy and society”.
- 1.2. Via the mission, the GLA is working alongside London Councils; local authorities; community and business groups; cultural and third-sector organisations; anchor institutions; and the property sector, to:
- bring vacant and underused high-street buildings and public spaces into productive use
 - promote local employment
 - protect existing community and cultural spaces
 - introduce new types of businesses and civic organisations to London’s high streets.
- 1.3. The HSFA Challenge is a key programme within the mission. From 2021-22 to 2022-23, it provides £4.085m of strategic enabling funding, targeted advice and knowledge-sharing opportunities; and supports achievement of the mission target of an exemplar project in each London borough.
- 1.4. It invites local partnerships to bring forward and co-design innovative high-street recovery strategies and proposals. Each strategy can address common and local challenges, and underpin the public reimagining of high streets and town centres across London. Strategies can support actions across an entire high street; or focus on an innovative, exemplar high-street recovery project.
- 1.5. The HSFA Challenge draws together multiple funding strands into a single funding source to reduce the bureaucratic burden on applicants. Approvals are in place for £4.085m funding in 2021-22 and 2022-23, as set out in the table below.

		2021-22		2022-23		Total	
Source	Existing approval	Revenue (£000)	Capital (£000)	Revenue (£000)	Capital (£000)	Revenue (£000)	Capital (£000)
COVID-19 Economic Recovery: High Streets Challenge Fund 1	MD2739	520	–	980	500	1,500	500
COVID-19 Economic Recovery: Workspace Pilot	MD2739	–	–	325	–	325	–
High Streets Adaptive Strategies	DD2443	–	–	210	–	210	–
Tomorrow’s Markets	DD2526	–	–	100	–	100	–
Recovery Fund – Building Strong Communities	MD2726	–	–	150	–	150	–
GLA Economic Recovery: High Streets Challenge Fund 2	MD2901	–	–	1,300	–	1,300	–
Total		520	–	3,065	500	3,585	500

- 1.6. The HSFA Challenge is being delivered in three stages from March 2021 to March 2023. With the benefit of the three-stage process, the HSFA Challenge has been able to curate a programme that aligns with its priorities including affording extra time for emerging partnerships to bid for further funding.

Stages 1 and 2

- 1.7. Through an open call in March 2021, the GLA and London boroughs jointly invited local high-street partnerships with an interest in developing an idea for their area to come forward, encouraging and supporting the widest participation from London's diverse communities. London boroughs, with support from the GLA Regeneration team, appraised submissions to identify a preferred exemplar high-street project in each borough.
- 1.8. In July 2021, 34 exemplar projects were each awarded £20,000 seed funding to: develop their partnership in terms of outreach and governance; engage with local residents and businesses; gather local insights; and develop a strategic brief for their high street. In total, £680,000 in revenue was awarded.

Stage 3 – Round 1

- 1.9. In September 2021, the exemplar projects were invited to apply for Stage 3 funding to provide additional capacity for the detailed development of place-based high-street strategies, community engagement, feasibility work and proposals for their assets.
- 1.10. In December 2021, 15 of the exemplar projects were awarded £2.296m of grant funding as a contribution towards the costs of delivery these activities.
- 1.11. Mayoral Decision form MD2901 (High Streets for All Challenge – Allocation and expenditure for 2021-23) sets out the details of these projects. It also records the Mayor's:
 - approval of £50,000 for associated operational expenditure and programme support costs, to support exemplar projects in the development of their project proposals with targeted expert advice; and to provide for, and enable, knowledge-sharing opportunities
 - delegation of authority to the Executive Director, Good Growth, to approve detailed funding allocations to future successful applications in accordance with the principles and priorities set out in this decision form.

Stage 3 – Round 2

- 1.12. In March 2022, a second application round for the remaining £1.059m Stage 3 funding opened. Successful projects can secure up to £200,000 in revenue funding available for successful projects. In addition, up to £80,000 in capital funding is available for one or two successful projects to deliver 'proof of concept' activities, testing the effectiveness of proposed strategies and helping to develop larger projects.
- 1.13. When the applications window closed in May 2022, we received 14 applications with a total combined ask of £2.517m.
- 1.14. The evaluation process had three distinct stages: validation, appraisal and moderation. These stages are detailed below:
 - **Validation** provided an initial check that all applicants had provided all requested information to allow detailed assessment to take place.
 - **Appraisal** focused on the detail of proposals and interrogated whether applicants would deliver high-quality projects and outcomes, and what sort of contribution they would make to the strategic themes of the HSFA Challenge. Input from teams across the GLA was sought to add to the understanding of specific sectors, and to ensure that applications would maximise delivery against the full range of Mayoral priorities.
 - **Moderation** provided a further level of scrutiny and introduced a programme-wide view and assessment process. The aim of this was to check consistency of assessment, to consider whether the mix of projects met the aim of achieving a balanced programme, and to scrutinise investment-readiness.

- 1.15. This process generated a list of seven recommended projects as set out in Appendix A of this decision form. This decision form seeks approval to provide £1.059m of grant-funding from the £4.085m funding envelope for the HSFA Challenge to contribute to the costs of delivery of these projects.

Learning and legacy

- 1.16. The HSFA mission emerged from practitioner lead research, practice and collaboration – such as the Good Growth by Design programme and the High Street Network, and engagement with London Councils. This means the mission has strong partnerships and networks in place to share learning from the HSFA exemplar projects. We will ensure learning from these projects will be captured to inform future place-based regeneration initiatives led by the Mayor. In addition, we will use London Recovery Board processes to ensure that lessons learned and from project delivery are widely shared.
- 1.17. The HSFA Challenge has been designed from the outset to create a community of practice, and enable learning to be captured and disseminated effectively and to leave a positive legacy. The High Street Network – which includes private and public stakeholders, residents, traders and built environment professionals – meets regularly, and we will use this established forum to share ideas, knowledge and expertise coming out of the HSFA Challenge.
- 1.18. The HSFA Playbook has been developed as both a funding prospectus and a resource of useful practical examples of innovative high-street renewal. The exemplar projects will share learning through programme-wide workshops and networking events, which are supported by the Mayor's Design Advocates and the Good Growth by Design programme. This learning will be captured in an updated HSFA Possibilities Playbook to disseminate the approaches and impact of the exemplar projects to a broader audience.
- 1.19. All exemplar projects, including those that do not receive Stage 3 funding, will be able to use their strategy development as the basis for local action and for seeking funding from other sources, building a pipeline of schemes to take advantage of future investment opportunities.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

Objectives

- 2.1. The objectives of the HSFA Challenge programme are to:
- develop the capacity of local authorities and town centre partnerships to work with community groups and the private sector to plan for, safeguard and directly deliver a diverse, resilient and thriving mix of high-street and town-centre activity within easy reach of all Londoners, at all times of day and night
 - foster a culture of ideas, collaboration and invention to bring vacant and underused buildings into productive use, promoting local employment and near-home working, protecting existing community and cultural spaces, and introducing new types of businesses and civic organisations
 - promote walking, cycling and wider accessibility, enhanced public spaces, urban greening and cultural engagement
 - pilot high-street innovation zones building on the Night Time Enterprise Zones pilot and existing Creative Enterprise Zones, as well as related planning, licensing, property management and economic development approaches.

Expected outcomes

- 2.2. During the evaluation of the Stage 3 Round 2 applications, particular attention was given to developing a balanced programme to address the full breadth of challenges set out in the HSFA Possibilities Playbook.

2.3. **Key HSFA Challenge themes:** all of the selected projects address multiple key challenge themes set out in the HSFA Possibilities Playbook. This reflects the following priorities:

- A public welcome: creating streets and public spaces that encourage walking, cycling and cultural activity, and boost visitor confidence, generating a thriving mix of high-street activity within easy reach of all Londoners and at all times of day and night (seven projects).
- Innovative places of exchange: supporting new types of business and nurturing innovation within local economies through place-based policy development; targeted business support; and planning, licensing, and cultural and economic development incentives (six projects).
- Generating social value: ensuring that high-street economies generate public value, shared prosperity and the socially productive use of land and property for the communities they serve (four projects).
- Connected communities: promoting social integration and active citizenship by strengthening local collaboration and securing vital social, civic and cultural infrastructure (five projects).
- Responding to the climate emergency: tackling the climate and ecological emergencies and poor air quality, whilst creating green jobs, developing skills, and supporting a just transition to a low-carbon circular economy (two projects).

2.4. A list of key performance indicators has been established, which includes:

- additional funding raised/invested by delivery partners and other bodies
- number of new jobs created or existing jobs safeguarded
- increase in square metres of new or improved public realm
- increase in footfall: increase in the number of people accessing a defined area during the day and night
- increase in the number of vacant or underused units being brought back into productive day/night use
- the number of community businesses, cultural and civic organisations, supported on the high street.

2.5. Projects have not been asked to quantify targets in their applications. Officers will work with the successful projects to agree targets as part of their high-street strategy development, and to capture outputs during delivery. Ongoing engagement by officers will also help to ensure that rich and productive partnerships are established to underpin the more complex high-street strategy projects; and that more asset-focused projects engage with the place-specific issues and opportunities to improve impact of the investment.

2.6. **Cross-cutting delivery:** alignment of the Challenge with other Mayoral priorities is another key objective. Within the successful project applications there are particularly strong opportunities to develop projects that specifically:

- respond to 24-hour London priorities to develop local night-time strategies, support the evening economy and improve women's safety at night (three projects)
- support health and wellbeing through community-led activities (four projects)
- provide opportunities for young Londoners to participate in the projects (five projects).

2.7. **Targeted funding opportunities:** the HSFA Challenge draws together multiple funding strands into a single funding source. Particular consideration has been given to projects that will:

- explore new models of affordable and flexible workspace, following on from GLA research to identify viable models for repurposing underused or vacant space into space that meets the needs of London's new ways of working (four projects)
- support street markets in developing targeted plans that address: new forms of market management; trader recruitment and training; renewed trader and business relations; growing local supply chains; supporting local employment and training; and helping to deliver environmental improvements (five projects)

- support the growth of social enterprises and community businesses in their area (two projects)
- 2.8. **Diversity of partnerships:** applications have been put forward by broad range of public, private and third-sector organisations. Through the evaluation process we have generated a group of recommended projects that has a balanced mix of lead organisations:
- community-led partnerships including charities, community interest companies and neighbourhood forums (two projects)
 - business-led partnerships including business improvement districts, traders' associations and limited companies (three projects)
 - local authority-led partnerships (two projects).
- 2.9. All successful projects will be delivered through local partnerships. The evaluation of applications considered the range organisations and groups involved each partnership; their role in developing the high street strategy; and the skills and capacity they would bring to the project. It also considered arrangements to govern the project, and approaches to continue to involve local communities and businesses.
- 2.10. **Geographic distribution:** this round supports one project in inner London (allocating 17 per cent of funding) and six projects in outer London (allocating 83 per cent of funding).

Expenditure breakdown

- 2.11. The expenditure breakdown per work strand in the HSFA Challenge programme is as follows:

	2021-22		2022-23		All years		
	Revenue (£000)	Capital (£000)	Revenue (£000)	Capital (£000)	Revenue (£000)	Capital (£000)	Total (£000)
Exemplar projects: Stage 2	520	–	160	–	680	–	680
Exemplar projects: Stage 3 Round 1	–	–	1,876	420	1,876	420	2,296
Programme support	–	–	50	–	50	–	50
Total committed to date	520	–	2,086	420	2,606	420	3,026
Exemplar projects: Stage 3 Round 2	–	–	979	80	979	80	1,059
Total	520	–	3,065	500	3,585	500	4,085

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the Equality Act), as a public authority the GLA must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and any conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act; and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. This involves having due regard to the need to remove or minimise any disadvantage suffered by those who share a relevant protected characteristic that is connected to that characteristic; taking steps to meet the different needs of such people; and encouraging them to participate in public life or in any other activity where their participation is disproportionately low. The equalities comments should specifically relate to the decision.
- 3.2. The relevant protected characteristics under section 149 of the Equality Act are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marital or civil partnership status, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. Compliance with the duty may involve ensuring people with a protected characteristic are provided with all the opportunities that those without the characteristic would have.

- 3.3. The Mayor's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy sets out how the Mayor works to create a fairer, more equal, integrated city where all people feel welcome and able to fulfil their potential. Equality, diversity and inclusion are subsequently enshrined within the GLA's strategies, programmes and activities.
- 3.4. The GLA will ensure that (as part of its ongoing legal responsibility to have due regard to the need to promote equality, in everything it does, including its decision-making) barriers are removed that may prevent those with protected characteristics benefiting from the projects.
- 3.5. The application process for the HSFA Challenge has made explicitly clear that selected exemplar projects should be developed in collaboration with the local community, including under-represented groups such as those with protected characteristics. This will help advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 3.6. All strategies and projects have illustrated how they are considering the needs of their local communities, specifically under-represented groups, such as those with protected characteristics; and what they will do to ensure that, as relevant, their needs are included in the strategies and projects; and they benefit from them. The core of the HSFA Challenge puts under-represented communities first, at the forefront of the design and implementation.

4. Other considerations

Key risks and issues

- 4.1. The key risks and issues are set out in the table below.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation	RAG rating
Applicants are unable to deliver projects by March 2023	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stage 2 seed funding provided capacity to develop suitable proposals The GLA is actively supporting projects through workshops and the High Streets Expert Panel 	Yellow
Projects do not deliver on HSFA Challenge objectives	Low	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Possibilities Playbook has been published to set out the aims and objectives of the programme, and provide resources and practical examples The scope of the projects will be confirmed in funding agreements with successful applicants 	Green
Projects are unable to secure significant community engagement	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The High Streets Expert Panel will provide support for community engagement in the development of the high-street strategies 	Yellow
The HSFA programme fails to effectively disseminate learning	Low	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The GLA will work actively with the exemplar projects to capture and share learning with its networks and mission partners including London Councils 	Green

Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

- 4.2. The funding outlined in this Decision Form will be used to support the mission-based approach that the Mayor has adopted for London's economic and social recovery. This programme has been developed with the aim of developing and delivering strategically important projects that will contribute directly to the HSFA mission.
- 4.3. The HSFA Challenge programme supports cross-cutting recovery principles set out by the London Recovery Board. Funded projects will be expected to deliver outcomes that address social, economic and health inequalities; deliver a cleaner, greener London; and ensure Londoners are at the heart of recovery. It supports the Building Strong Communities mission to enable all Londoners to play an active role in their communities, and make London a more equal and inclusive city post-COVID-19. It also supports the Green New Deal mission to address the climate and ecological emergencies and improve air quality.
- 4.4. The proposed expenditure will deliver against multiple objectives included in the London Plan 2021 to promote and enhance the vitality and viability of London's varied town centres; the Mayor's Economic Development Strategy; the Culture Strategy for London; the 24-hour London vision; and the Healthy Streets agenda.

Consultations and impact assessments

- 4.5. The outline for the HSFA Challenge has been informed by the High Streets – Adaptive Strategies guidance, which was developed as part of the Mayor's Good Growth by Design programme. The HSFA Challenge has been developed in response to the issues and challenges that partners and stakeholders have raised in our discussions with them. It has been tested with London Councils and representatives from London boroughs, as well as the private and third sectors.
- 4.6. Impact assessments were undertaken for the above-mentioned relevant strategies. As this funding will help deliver the objectives of these strategies, the original impact assessments are still relevant to the programme.
- 4.7. There will be appropriate levels of impact assessment and stakeholder consultation in relation to the development and delivery of exemplar projects funded through this programme.

Conflicts of interest

- 4.8. No GLA officer involved in the drafting or clearance of this DD is aware of any conflicts of interest with the proposed projects.
- 4.9. If any conflicts of interest arise during the grant-funding process, officers will be required to declare that interest as part of a requirement of the Contracts and Funding Code, and not take any part in the grant-funding process for that particular project. This process should also be in accordance with the Code of Ethics and Standards for Staff, and accompanying guidance on registering and declaring interests.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1 Approval is sought for the expenditure of up to £ 1,059,000 to successful bidders as outlined in Appendix A. This expenditure will be to contribute to the costs of delivery of the third party projects within the High Streets for All Challenge (Fund 2). This expenditure will be funded via the approved programme budget in place for 2022-23.
- 5.2 Delegated authority was granted to the Executive Director – Good Growth under MD2901.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1. The foregoing sections of this report indicate that:

6.1.1. the decisions requested of the Director 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 economic development and wealth creation in Greater London; and

6.1.2. in formulating the proposals in respect of which a decision is sought, officers have complied with the GLA'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 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 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 Director should have particular regard to section 3 (above) of this report.

6.3. If the Director makes the decisions sought, officers must ensure that the funding agreements are put in place between and executed by the GLA and recipients before any commitment to fund is made.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

7.1. The timetable for the delivery of the HSFA Challenge projects is shown below:

Activity	Timeline
Stage 3 Round 2: projects selected for further funding and support	July 2022
Stage 3 Round 2: grants awarded, delivery commences	August/September 2022
Stage 3: Projects complete	March 2023

Appendices and supporting papers:

Appendix A: Stage 3 Round 2 recommended project list

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? NO

If YES, for what reason:

Until what date: (a date is required if deferring)

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:

Tim Rettler has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Assistant Director/Head of Service:

Louise Duggan 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

A summary of this decision was reviewed by the Corporate Investment Board on 4 July 2022

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES:

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

Signature



Date

8 July 2022