

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR MAYORAL DECISION – MD2860

Title: Green New Deal: Green infrastructure investment including a Nature Recovery Fund

Executive summary:

As part of London's Recovery Programme, the Green New Deal mission sets an objective to improve London's natural environment and tackle the climate and ecological emergencies. This decision requests approval for funding to invest in green infrastructure projects to help meet this objective.

This package of green infrastructure projects is aimed at building sector capacity, improving the evidence base and supporting the delivery of strategic green infrastructure opportunities (including supporting the GLA's statutory planning function). It includes a Climate Resilience through Nature programme designed to support boroughs in responding to the climate and ecological emergencies by improving London's Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation through a Nature Recovery Fund and by providing skills and training.

Funding is from the "Climate Resilience through Nature" (£0.5m) and "the delivery of statutory duties around air quality and waste, biodiversity and sustainable development" (£0.150m) allocations in the GLA Mayoral Budget 2021-22 (approved under MD2795). A further £0.5m and £0.173m is allocated in 2022-23, subject to future budget confirmation for the 2022-23 financial year.

As part of the delivery of the Green New Deal mission, the proposed work will enhance green spaces and improve London's ecological and climate resilience, furthering the city's status as the world's first National Park City during the year of the biodiversity and climate COPs. It will also support policies in the London Environment Strategy, and complement the greening programmes considered for approval under MD2824 and MD2827.

Decision:

That the Mayor approves the following total expenditure of £1.323m to fund a green infrastructure and Climate Resilience through Nature programme with expenditure in 2021-22 and 2022-23 (subject to future budget confirmation):

- £1m in total for a Climate Resilience through Nature programme with a spend profile as follows:
 - £0.5m in 2021-22
 - £0.5m in 2022-23
- £0.323m in total on green infrastructure covering strategic projects, data, evidence, planning and capacity building, with a spend profile as follows:
 - £0.150m in 2021-22
 - £0.173m in 2022-23.

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:

15/7/24

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

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. The Mayor has committed to make London a world leader in improving the environment locally and globally, taking the lead in tackling climate change, reducing pollution, developing a low carbon economy, consuming fewer resources and using them more effectively and ensuring all Londoners have access to a high-quality, biodiverse environment. To address these challenges the Mayor has committed to a Green New Deal for London, combining strong economic recovery with action to tackle the climate and ecological emergencies creating green jobs and opportunities for all Londoners. It will help ensure London becomes a zero carbon, zero pollution city by 2030.
- 1.2. The London Recovery Board, co-chaired by the Mayor of London and the Chair of London Councils, has set out a programme for the capital's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that seeks to build back better and make London a fairer, more equal, greener, and more resilient city. Accelerating the delivery of a cleaner, greener London is one of the Board's five key outcomes for the Recovery Programme.
- 1.3. As part of the Recovery Programme, the Green New Deal mission, jointly developed by the Greater London Authority (GLA) and London Councils, will tackle the climate and ecological emergencies and improve air quality by doubling the size of London's green economy to accelerate job creation for all. The four objectives of this mission are to:
 - improve London's natural environment, improve air quality, and tackle the climate and ecological emergencies
 - promote and incentivise activities that sustain and grow London's green economy
 - prioritise interventions reducing health inequalities and social injustices
 - engage Londoners and businesses in the journey to become a zero-pollution and greener city.
- 1.4. Making London's public realm greener, improving access to and enhancing green spaces, increasing the capital's resilience to the impacts of a warming climate, and improving air quality are critical to achieving the aims of the Green New Deal mission. The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated more than ever the importance of green infrastructure¹ for Londoners' wellbeing, reinforcing the extensive existing evidence base.²
- 1.5. It has, however, also highlighted the inequalities in access to green spaces. Half of London's households are in areas of deficiency of access to green space³, with lower-income Londoners, and Black, Asian and other minority ethnic Londoners, much more likely to live in these locations. This inequality is not limited to access, but is apparent at many levels – from parks being 'white by design'⁴ and children from Black, Asian and other minority ethnic backgrounds spending less time outside in nature⁵ through to linked health inequality⁶ and a lack of diversity in the green space sector.⁷

¹ The network of parks, green spaces, rivers and canals, wetlands, trees, gardens, green roofs and walls.

² www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/11015viv_natural_capital_account_for_london_v7_full_vis.pdf

³ Defined by the London Plan as more than 400m from a local park of at least 2 hectares.

⁴ See the work of Dr Bridget Snaith, University of East London www.futureoflondon.org.uk/2020/10/20/parks-and-green-space-does-everyone-feel-welcome/

⁵ 56% spent time outside once a week vs 70% of children from a white background

[Monitor_of_Engagement_with_the_Natural_Environment__MENE_Childrens_Report_2018-2019_rev.pdf](#) (publishing.service.gov.uk)

⁶ 'all demographic groups benefit [from green space] but deprived groups appear to gain the most health benefit' [Improving access to greenspace: 2020 review](#) (publishing.service.gov.uk)

⁷ London Green Spaces Commission report, August 2020 [4244_-_gla_-_london_green_spaces_commission_report_v7_0.pdf](#)

Addressing these inequalities requires action from across the sector and its wider stakeholders at many levels. Both programmes outlined in this MD have this at their core.

1.6. This MD seeks the Mayor's approval to spend the following GLA budget (totalling £1.323m):

- £0.650m approved in the 2021-22 GLA Mayoral Budget under the Green New Deal mission (under cover of MD2795), comprising:
 - £0.5m for "Climate Resilience through Nature"
 - £0.150m for green infrastructure programmes under "Delivery of statutory duties around air quality and waste, biodiversity and sustainable development"
- £0.673m from the 2022-23 budget under the Green New Deal mission (subject to budget approval) comprising:
 - £0.5m for "Climate Resilience through Nature"
 - £0.173m for green infrastructure programmes.

1.7. This MD covers a package of green infrastructure work. These projects and programmes are listed under section 2.3. The green infrastructure programmes are aimed at building sector capacity, improving the evidence base and supporting the delivery of strategic green infrastructure opportunities. The work will also support the GLA's statutory planning function. The proposals include funding to support the evolution of the Centre for Excellence for London's green spaces, as well as a new Climate Resilience through Nature programme designed to support boroughs in responding to the climate and ecological emergencies by improving London's Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) through a new Nature Recovery Fund and by providing skills and training.

1.8. The Mayor's London Green Spaces Commission was established in 2019 to recommend how boroughs could be better supported in the future management and funding of green space. The Commission report, published in August 2020, recommended supporting Parks for London to become a Centre for Excellence for green space. The funding outlined in this MD builds on ADD2506 to enable Parks for London to develop their new role and – with the support of London Councils, the London Environment Directors' Network (LEDNet) and the Chief Cultural and Leisure Officers Association (CLOA) – become the enabling organisation needed to build capacity in the sector. The Centre for Excellence will not only enhance and improve management and funding of green space, but also start to address the inequalities highlighted above. The Centre for Excellence's first major programme of work will focus on health inequalities, addressing how green spaces can help support young people's mental health. This will also help support the Mental Health & Wellbeing mission.

1.9. Research⁸ shows that the path into a nature conservation career is often through volunteering. This creates a significant barrier to entry for many, particularly young people from the most economically deprived households. The Wild City Traineeships programme will create 20 paid traineeships, hosted by the London Wildlife Trust (LWT), for young people aged 16-25 from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds and from areas of socio-economic deprivation; and for young people with disabilities. This will help reduce these barriers for Londoners and increase the diversity of the sector. The project will also host a Green Skills Fair, and recruit and support three Young Advisers. The programme will be closely linked to the Centre for Excellence as it develops, to help ensure longer-term opportunities are available for those involved.

1.10. Addressing the ecological emergency is also central to the Green New Deal. The green infrastructure programme of work will develop and trial new technologies to allow us to better monitor trends in the city's biodiversity, so that we can track progress against addressing the ecological emergency. It will

⁸ Our Bright Future Report, March 2020: www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/media/insights/documents/Support-for-young-people-to-work-in-the-environmental-sector-research-report-FINAL.pdf?mtime=20201116161552&focal=none

also build an evidence base to allow us to discharge our statutory planning duties regarding mandatory Biodiversity Net Gains for new developments.

- 1.11. As COP15 for biodiversity approaches, and the Environment Bill brings forward new structures for nature's recovery, there is an urgent need to continue to take action to halt biodiversity loss and provide the leadership the sector needs to enable others to do the same. The GLA has a key role in convening boroughs and other stakeholders to provide direction and support on the forthcoming statutory requirement to prepare and deliver Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRSs). Core to delivering an LNRS will be the enhancement of London's invaluable SINC network. There are over 1,600 SINC sites in London, covering nearly 20 per cent of the city's surface area; they form the core of the city's ecological network. Some of these sites are also designated as Local Nature Reserves, or as internationally or nationally important sites for the habitats or species found within them.
- 1.12. Most SINC sites are managed by boroughs or other public bodies and offer opportunities for Londoners to enjoy nature close-up. It is estimated that 40-60 per cent of SINC sites are not covered by any regular management to conserve or enhance their special biodiversity.⁹ Years of cuts to public-sector budgets means that fewer than half of boroughs have access to in-house ecological advice. For those that do, this resource is often spread too thinly to adequately oversee SINC management, or to invest in the creation of new habitats to meet the targets set to create new Priority Habitats for conservation in the London Environment Strategy. The Climate Resilience through Nature programme provides a framework for enhancing SINC sites and creating new habitats through the Nature Recovery Fund. It will support projects that enhance SINC sites and secure better future management of sites; and also build skills in the wider local authority green-space sector to support boroughs to better plan for and deliver nature's recovery.
- 1.13. The mission-based approach to recovery requires the public, private and voluntary sectors to work together to deliver joint goals. The work proposed in this MD involves a wide range of partners, using the strengths and expertise of each to provide good value for money and deliver on the aims of the Green New Deal. All the programmes outlined below will be project managed by the green infrastructure team at the GLA. The Wild City Traineeships will be run by LWT, building on the success of and learning from their previous traineeship programme 'Keeping it Wild'.¹⁰ It is proposed that the GLA grant fund LWT to deliver a new cohort of traineeships through the Wild City Traineeship programme which will ensure that participants develop skills that prepare them for accessing paid nature recovery sector roles.
- 1.14. The £0.6m Nature Recovery Fund will operate as a grant scheme with a competitive call for projects, open to local authorities and civil society organisations who manage SINC sites. This Fund and the accompanying SINC/Local Nature Recovery Plans (LNRP) Advisory Programme will be delivered in partnership with LWT. LWT are recognised experts in managing London sites for their nature conservation interest. They own and manage SINC sites and statutory protected wildlife sites across London and support boroughs and local communities to manage other SINC sites, including leading strategic landscape-scale nature recovery projects across multiple sites. They are also the only environmental organisation on the GLA-chaired London Wildlife Site Board which provides guidance to boroughs on the identification of SINC sites and ensures consistency in site selection between boroughs. LWT will help promote the schemes to boroughs and manage the assessment of applications for grant funding. LWT will also be considered for the management of grant payments alongside other providers the GLA uses for other grant programmes e.g. Groundwork.
- 1.15. The Nature Recovery Fund will focus on enhancing SINC sites and supporting the sites to be better managed in the long term. The types of projects it could fund include: expanding and buffering SINC sites through new habitat creation, works to enable better site management such as fencing or access, trials and monitoring of innovative management techniques that can be rolled out to other sites, or projects to improve habitats between SINC sites to ensure they are better connected and therefore more resilient.

⁹ See Pg. 22-23: www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/les_appendix_1_-_general_assessment.pdf

¹⁰ www.wildlondon.org.uk/keeping-it-wild

It is anticipated that grants will be of between £25,000 and £50,000 and it is expected to support a total of 15-20 projects across London. This is a similar grant size to the GI team's existing Grow Back Greener grants (approved via MD2827). However, the Nature Recovery Fund grants will have different application criteria. They will be focused on outcomes that address the ecological emergency and will only fund projects connected to enhancement of SINC's. They will also fund different types of expenditure (such as ecological surveys and drafting management plans). The Nature Recovery Grants will have a project delivery window from January 2022 to March 2023 reflecting the specialist nature of the types of projects we expect to fund. This will allow projects to include monitoring and delivery aspects where beneficial and allow any practical works to be delivered at the time of year that is most appropriate depending on the site's nature conservation interest.

- 1.16. Support for the evolution of Parks for London (PfL) into a Centre for Excellence will be provided through a grant funding award to PfL with clear milestones, outputs, and outcomes. Key objectives of the GLA funding will be to increase PfL's supporters to sustain the Centre for Excellence over the longer term and for PfL to develop new relationships with potential new supporters and collaborators beyond the green space sector to help grow capacity and reach.
- 1.17. The smaller projects and programmes described under "Enabling strategic green infrastructure (GI) delivery and developing the GI evidence base for London" will be delivered through a mix of approaches, primarily in-house. Research work, outside of the existing service level agreement with Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL), will be tendered for in accordance with the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

Objectives

- 2.1. The green infrastructure investment programme set out in this Mayoral Decision will be expected to contribute to the four overarching objectives of the Green New Deal mission which are to:
 - improve London's natural environment, improve air quality, and tackle the climate and ecological emergencies
 - promote and incentivise activities that sustain and grow London's green economy
 - prioritise interventions reducing health inequalities and social injustices
 - engage Londoners and businesses in the journey to become a zero-pollution and greener city.

Outcomes

- 2.2. The green infrastructure programme will support projects that deliver across the following key outcomes:
 - increased green skills, within boroughs, community groups and the voluntary sector
 - increased inclusion by accelerating the pace at which people from diverse backgrounds are better represented in the green jobs sector
 - increased resilience of London's ecological network, due to more SINC's being in better conservation management and the creation of new Priority Habitats
 - enhanced biodiversity and creation of wildlife habitat
 - increased greening of the built environment, particularly within new development
 - stronger protection for green infrastructure

- new approaches developed to enhance and champion green spaces
- improved quality and management of green spaces, including making them more inclusive and climate resilient
- improved funding mechanisms for green space, and coordination and targeting of green infrastructure investment.

2.3. The tables below set out the main elements of the work programme, expected outputs, overall costs and expenditure related decisions broken down by year (2021-22 and 2022-23).

Table 1 - Climate Resilience through Nature programmes

Programme	Outputs	Outcomes	21-22	22-23
Wild City Traineeships (hosted by London Wildlife Trust)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 paid traineeships for diverse cohort completed • Three Young Advisers recruited • A Green Jobs Fair 	<p>20 trainees have developed new skills that allow them to access paid roles in the nature sector</p> <p>Increased inclusion in London's green jobs market</p> <p>Greater awareness among under-represented young people of the opportunities in the nature sector</p>	£265,430	£36,173
SINC/Local Nature Recovery Plans (LNRP) Advisory Programme (in partnership with LWT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and direct support for local authorities in the development of projects to improve the SINC network and create new habitat • At least half of London boroughs supported to develop LNRPs • Training and guidance for local groups, civic societies, neighbourhood forums on SINC and LNRPs • A Nature Recovery toolkit that boroughs can use in the longer term • Report assessing cost of additional burden for London in meeting Nature Recovery Targets 	<p>The extent and quality of habitat to support nature in London is increased</p> <p>Boroughs and other land managers better able to plan for and deliver locally relevant biodiversity enhancements and deliver their own LNRPs to underpin a statutory Nature Recovery Strategy for London</p>	£34,570	£63,827
Nature Recovery Fund (in partnership with LWT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circa 15- 20 projects that enhance SINC • New Priority Habitat created • A Nature Recovery conference to share learning, encouraging 	<p>London's SINC network is more resilient</p> <p>The extent of Priority Habitat in London is increased creating more space for nature</p>	£200,000	£400,000

Programme	Outputs	Outcomes	21-22	22-23
	borough networking and promote the project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case studies published so that best practice can be shared 	Increased skills mean boroughs are better supported to plan and deliver their own nature projects		

Table 2 - Green infrastructure programmes

Programme	Outputs	Outcomes	21-22	22-23
Supporting the evolution of Parks for London (PfL) into a Centre for Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building capacity in research and communications, raising awareness of PFL and the work of the Centre for Excellence Development officer in place and new contacts made to broaden reach of organisation and funders identified Young People's Health officer in place and project setup and young people involved in the co-design of the project Best practice activities aimed at mental health and young people in the public realm identified and shared Workshops held to disseminate results from Young People's Health project 	Better-funded and coordinated GI sector in London Better-managed green space, particularly in relation to addressing inequalities, leading to sustainable funding and investment Raising the profile of the multiple benefits of green infrastructure Building the supporter base, bringing in private landowners and housing associations to improve Parks for London's sustainability Enlarged staff team secure more sustainable funding sources	£75,000	£75,000
Enabling strategic green infrastructure (GI) delivery and developing the GI evidence base for London.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investible project scoping for nature-based solutions Impact assessment and recommendations for future iterations of the Urban Greening Factor London Plan policy Biodiversity monitoring – testing new technologies and preparing a monitoring plan Building the evidence base for biodiversity net gain policy development and local nature recovery networks 2022-23 data subscription and project support from London's Local Environmental Record Centre (GiGL). 	Evidence and better understanding of investment opportunities and mechanisms to support investment in nature-based solutions with the aim of developing sustainable future funding streams Future government funding influenced to deliver for urban areas and partnerships developed towards enhancing and increasing green spaces and biodiversity Better-targeted intervention in areas most at need of new GI and	£75,000	£98,000

Programme	Outputs	Outcomes	21-22	22-23
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparing a baseline and monitoring against the Mayor's pledge for Londoners to live within 10 minutes' walk of a green space Green infrastructure and adaptation design guide Development of a green spaces skills hub (with the GLA skills team) Preparing new All London Green Grid (ALGG) guidance and supporting the development of strategic projects Training, advice and guidance for boroughs and others on implementation of London Plan policies including the preparation and delivery of Green Infrastructure Strategies Development of London Plan Guidance to ensure compliance with London Plan GI policies 	<p>biodiversity better accounted for in decision making</p> <p>Better coordinated and more proactive, holistic and equitable approach to GI in London</p> <p>Joined up approach to funding opportunities</p> <p>Better adoption and application of GI policy</p> <p>Strategic framework for borough GI projects helping drive transformative and cross boundary change</p> <p>London green spaces workforce more diverse, more aspirational and with better capacity to address current and future issues in relation to management and enhancement of GI</p>		

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 as well as to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who have a protected characteristic¹¹ 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; 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.
- 3.2. The programmes outlined in this MD form part of the policies and proposals in the London Environment Strategy, which has been informed by a full integrated impact assessment, including consideration of equalities.¹² The Equalities Assessment Report for the London Environment Strategy noted that exposure to poor environmental conditions is much higher among Black, Asian and minority ethnic Londoners.
- 3.3. Black, Asian and minority ethnic Londoners, and lower-income Londoners, are more likely to live in areas of deficiency of access to green space, or in areas where green space quality is poor. GLA research has found that women, adult Londoners aged 25 and under, lower-income Londoners and

¹¹ The "protected" characteristics and groups are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, gender, religion or belief, sexual orientation, and marriage/civil partnership status. Compliance with the Equality Act may involve treating people with a protected characteristic more favourably than those without the characteristic. The duty must be exercised with an open mind and at the time a decision is taken. Conscientious regard must be had that is appropriate in all of the circumstances.

¹² https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/draft_les_equality_impact_assessment.pdf

social renters visit parks less often.¹³ National research has found that Black, Asian and minority ethnic people are least likely to visit green spaces. Similarly, 21 per cent of households in London lack access to a private or shared garden, and across England, Black, Asian and minority ethnic people are less likely to have access to a garden than White people.¹⁴

- 3.4. Climate change will disproportionately affect those least able to respond and recover from it. Poorer Londoners will find it more difficult to recover from flooding and will suffer more from the impacts of the urban heat island effect. Extreme heat events will have a greater impact on older people, very young children, socially isolated people and people with existing health conditions.
- 3.5. The work outlined in this MD responds to, and aims to tackle, these disparities. The Wild City Trainee programme is specifically aimed at supporting young Londoners from underserved communities into the sector, and this work will be closely linked to the Centre for Excellence as it develops to help ensure longer term opportunities are available for those involved. The Centre for Excellence's health and green spaces programme has a particular focus on reaching those communities most impacted by the pandemic and social injustice. It will consider how London's green spaces can support young people's mental health, recognising the pandemic has and will continue to adversely impact this group. More generally, support to bolster the Centre for Excellence staff base will provide the resources to reach out to groups least likely to visit green spaces.
- 3.6. The projects within the Climate Resilience through Nature programme will support the enhancement of SINC's as well as building capacity and skills within boroughs. This will ensure SINC's are more resilient to the impacts of climate change and borough parks and green spaces teams are better able to identify and respond to climate impacts. This will in turn have wider benefits for those most impacted by climate change.
- 3.7. Each piece of work outlined in Tables 1 and 2 will be undertaken with the need for a diverse, fair and open process in mind. Interview panels for new roles will be diverse. Roles and consultancy work will be widely advertised and expectations on diversity and inclusion made clear to successful candidates.

4. Other considerations

- 4.1. The key risks and issues are set out in Table 3, below.

Table 3 – Risks and issues

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation	RAG rating
Further COVID-19 lockdown restrictions	Medium	High	Good communication to ensure frank discussions can take place around organisational capacity and delivery. In the event of a further lockdown, each project will be reviewed, and new parameters put in place where needed.	AMBER
Costs exceed those outlined	Low	Medium	Costs have been estimated using knowledge from previous contracts and projects. The scope of work will be reviewed to ensure they reflect the funding available.	GREEN

¹³ GLA polling undertaken September 2017 to inform London Environment Strategy

¹⁴ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/environmentalaccounts/articles/oneineightbritishhouseholdshasnogarden/2020-05-14>

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation	RAG rating
Lack of high-quality consultancies bid for work	Low	Low	Projects will be tendered competitively and reviewed to ensure quality of the consultancy is considered. Contracts will only be appointed if they meet the required standard.	GREEN
Existing supporters of Parks for London leave Centre for Excellence	Low	Medium	Communications clear and consistent around the evolution of Parks for London, with annual survey and informal soundings alerting staff to any concerns. Programme on young people's mental health responds to the priority given to health in 2020 annual survey of existing supporters.	GREEN
Boroughs do not have capacity to access Nature Recovery fund	Low	Medium	The programme will be structured to allow adequate time for boroughs to bid for funding. There is an established need for the fund and the capacity building element of the programme will ensure a pipeline of suitable projects.	GREEN

Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

4.2. The work outlined in this MD will contribute towards:

- London Environment Strategy Policy 5.1.1: protect, enhance and increase green areas in the city, to provide green infrastructure services and benefits that London needs now and in the future
- London Environment Strategy Policy 8.2.1: reduce the risk and manage the impacts of surface water, sewer, fluvial, reservoir and groundwater flooding in London
- London Environment Strategy Policy 8.2.3: increase the amount of sustainable drainage, prioritising greener systems across London in new development, and also retrofit solutions
- London Environment Strategy Proposal 5.1.1.f: back greater community involvement in the improvement and management of London's green spaces and natural environment
- London Environment Strategy Objective 5.1: increase tree canopy cover by 10 per cent, and to ensure that over half of London is green by 2050
- London Environment Strategy Objective 5.2: conserving and enhancing wildlife and natural habitats
- London Environment Strategy Policy 5.2.1: protect a core network of nature conservation sites and ensure a net gain in biodiversity
- London Environment Strategy Policy 5.3.1: address underinvestment, and improve the management of London's green infrastructure, by developing new business models and improving the awareness of the benefits of London's green infrastructure

- Inclusive London Strategic Objective 12: work with partners to help ensure our approach to improving green spaces is inclusive
- London Health Inequalities Strategy Objective 3.3: a greener city where all Londoners have access to good quality green spaces
- London Recovery Board high-level outcome to accelerate delivery of a cleaner, greener London, and Green New Deal mission to tackle the climate and ecological emergencies and improve air quality by doubling the size of London's green economy by 2030 to accelerate job creation for all.

Consultations and impact assessments

- 4.3. The Mayor's London Green Spaces Commission was established in 2019 to recommend how boroughs could be better supported in the future management and funding of green space. It was made up of 14 commissioners and met six times from April 2019 – March 2020. The Commission invited written and oral evidence, as well as undertaking research. This work informed the Commission's report (published in August 2020) which recommended supporting Parks for London to become a Centre for Excellence for green space. The Centre for Excellence will not only enhance and improve management and funding of green space, but also start to address the inequalities highlighted above. The Centre for Excellence's first major programme of work will focus on health inequalities, addressing how green spaces can help support young people's mental health.
- 4.4. Conserving London's wildlife and natural habitats is one of the three strategic green infrastructure priorities of the 2018 London Environment Strategy. The evidence base for the strategy showed that SINC's are integral to meeting this aim. However, it also showed that they are at risk from a chronic lack of management which would ultimately lead to declines in nature and declines in their quality as greenspaces for people. The responses received during the public consultation on the London Environment Strategy supported this conclusion and identified conserving wildlife sites and providing support and guidance for their management as a priority.¹⁵ The Integrated Impact Assessment for the strategy concluded that no negative effects were identified for the EqlA in relation to strategic green infrastructure policies, and that improving the quality of greenspaces, such as SINC's, would have positive impact on addressing inequalities in access to greenspace and nature.

Conflicts of interest

- 4.5. The GLA's Head of Green Infrastructure, Andrew Jones, is a trustee of Parks for London, which was chosen by the London Green Spaces Commission as the body to evolve into the Centre for Excellence for green spaces. He is not part of the decision chain for this work and will not be involved in the funding agreement or delivery. There are no other conflicts of interest to declare from any of those involved in the drafting or clearance of this Decision Form.
- 4.6. If any conflicts of interest arise during the delivery of the programme (for example, a GLA officer has links with an organisation which applies for a grant) they will declare that interest and not take any part in assessing that grant application or awarding funding to that organisation.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1. Mayoral approval is being sought for expenditure of £1.323m as part of the Green New Deal mission recovery programme to improve London's natural environment and tackle the climate and ecological emergencies. This programme will span two financial years.
- 5.2. Total expenditure of £0.65m scheduled for 2021–22 is funded from Green New Deal Climate Resilience Through Nature (£0.500m) and Urban Greening (£0.150m) approved under MD2795.

¹⁵ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/report_to_the_mayor.pdf

Further expenditure of £0.673m is scheduled for 2022-23 under the Green New Deal mission. It should be noted that this expenditure is not yet formally approved and is subject to future budget consideration.

Table 4

Programme	2021-22	2022-23	Total
Climate Resilience Through Nature	£0.5m	£0.5m	£1.0m
Urban Greening	£0.150m	£0.173m	£0.323m
Total	£0.65m	£0.673m	£1.323m

6. Legal comments

6.1 The foregoing sections of this report indicate that the decisions requested of the Mayor fall within the statutory powers of the Authority to promote and/or to do anything which is facilitative of or conducive or incidental to the improvement of the environment 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
- (c) consult with appropriate bodies.

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

Grant funding

6.3 To the extent that the projects set out in the decisions box involve the distribution of grant funding to third parties, officers must ensure that they comply with section 12 of the Authority's Contracts and Funding Code (the "Code"). Furthermore, the officers must ensure that an appropriate funding agreement be put in place between the Authority and the recipient, before any part of the funding be paid.

Procurement

6.4 Where the officers intend to procure services, supplies or works in furtherance of the projects, the budgets of which are set out in the decisions box, officers must comply with the requirements of the Code and liaise with Transport for London's commercial team in order to ensure that an appropriate agreement be put in place between the GLA and the contractor.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Wild City Traineeships	
Paid traineeships recruited	November 2021-March 2023
Young Ambassadors recruited	November 2021-March 2023
Green Jobs Fair	March 2023
SINC/LNRP Advisory Programme	
Training, guidance and support provided	October 2021-March 2023
Nature Recovery Toolkit produced	March 2023
Nature Recovery Fund	
15-20 nature recovery projects funded	By March 2023
Nature Recovery Conference	March 2023
Case studies and advice produced	March 2023
Centre for Excellence	Ongoing
Young People's Health project commences	October 2021
Development Officer in post	October 2021
Strategic delivery and evidence	
Biodiversity Monitoring trials commissioned	September 2021
Welsh Harp vision completed	November 2021
Investible NBS project scoping commissioned	November 2021
Biodiversity Net Gain policy review commissioned	November 2021
Urban Greening Factor impact review	March 2022
GiGL data subscription	April 2023
ALGG updated and delivery supported	April 2022 – March 2023
10-minute walk monitoring	Ongoing
Planning referral advice and guidance	Throughout 2023
Support to boroughs for strategic GI delivery	Ongoing
LNRS evidence-building	Ongoing

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: Publication to be deferred until after Climate Resilience through Nature programme launch.

Until what date: 30 November 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 – NO

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Drafting officer to confirm the following (✓)

Drafting officer:

Katrina Ramsey has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Sponsoring Director:

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

✓

Mayoral Adviser:

Shirley Rodrigues 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 13 September 2021

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES:

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

Signature



Date

13 September 2021

CHIEF OF STAFF:

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

Signature



Date

13 September 2021