

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2560

Title: GLA grant funding of the Levelling Up programme run by Centre for London

Executive Summary:

This Decision commits a GLA contribution of £15,000 towards delivery of a major strategic review of the Government's Levelling Up programme, outlined in the White Paper published in February 2022, which will be undertaken by Centre for London (CfL).

Levelling Up presents significant risks and opportunities for London. The Centre for London's work will complement the GLA's own activity by providing another voice, looking at the issues afresh and engaging with a wide range of stakeholders.

Decision:

That the Assistant Director of Strategy, Intelligence and Analysis approves expenditure of £15,000 in 2021/2022 towards delivery of a major strategic review of the Government's Levelling Up programme.

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: Jeremy Skinner

Position: Assistant Director, Strategy, Intelligence and Analysis

Signature:

Date: 23/2/22

Approval received via email from Jeremy Skinner, Assistant Director, Strategy, Intelligence and Analysis, to Richard Kember on 23 February 2022.

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. Levelling Up and Greater London is a programme of work that the Centre for London will undertake on behalf of various London stakeholders in the public and private sectors. Following on from the publication of the Government's white paper in February 2022, the focus of the work will be to respond to the white paper, demonstrating London's own challenges and the role that London can play in assisting the national economy. More information about the proposal is set out in Appendix 1.
- 1.2. This decision form request approval for expenditure of £15,000 of grant funding in 2021/2022 to Centre for London towards the delivery of a major strategic review of the Government's Levelling Up programme.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1. The main outcomes that the Centre for London hopes to achieve through this work include a new narrative on why London's success matters to the rest of the country and a more persuasive argument for the levelling up needs within the capital. It is hard to quantify the impact if this approach 'succeeds', but even modest achievements could yield millions more in pounds of grant and other types of funding coming to London as well as a clearer sense and more widespread understanding of the levelling up challenges that need to be tackled within the city.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. The review will be looking at various aspects of the inequalities that exist in the city, highlighting those in the context of the measures of 'levelling up' that the Government has started to outline in the white paper.

4. Other considerations

Key risks and issues

Risk	Mitigation
Project not seen as impartial as the GLA are involved.	Whilst the GLA will be involved in the project, CfL will lead the project. CfL is an independent, charitable, mission-led organisation and is well-placed to lead the work as they are seen as a neutral party. The Centre also has an unrivalled understanding of London issues and a track record of influencing and changing thinking and policy through robust and impartial research and analysis.
Failure to secure value for money from GLA financial contribution.	The GLA will have a representative on the project advisory group. The Strategy Team will ensure that clear strategic linkages are made between the project and the medium to long-term plans for London's

	recovery. Where possible to attribute improvements to London's funding settlement (or other successes to the programme), we will aim to document these for the benefit of future similar projects.
Failure to secure optimal involvement in the project.	GLA is represented on the Advisory Council for the project.

Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

- 4.1. The Levelling Up agenda affects many of the Mayor's strategies and priorities, including but not limited to the London Plan and Economic Development, Transport, Environment and Culture strategies, the Recovery Programme, the adult education budget and affordable housing programme.

Consultations and impact assessments

- 4.2. A range of London stakeholders, including from the business, policy and research communities, alongside representatives from the voluntary and community sector, and Londoners will be engaged in the levelling up work, including at the London conference which is expected to be held in November 2022. The work will include arranging seminars and other forms of engagement.
- 4.3. The Centre for London's chief executive, Nick Bowes, was previously the GLA's Mayoral Director of Policy. The GLA is confident this does not present a conflict of interest. Nick Bowes has had no direct involvement in agreeing the terms of the grant agreement including the detailed proposal and the amount of grant. This proposal is part of a long-term working relationship between the GLA and the Centre for London and relates to a Government policy – Levelling Up – that is of undoubted strategic importance to London and the GLA.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1 Approval is sought for the GLA to contribute £15,000 to Centre for London (CfL) for delivery of a major strategic review of the Government's Levelling Up programme that is to be undertaken by the Centre for London (CfL).
- 5.2 This contribution is expected to be paid to CfL by March 2022 and will be funded from the 2021-22 City Intelligence Assistant Director's budget held within the City Intelligence Unit that is part of Strategy & Communications Directorate.

6. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Project activity - Phase 1	Timing (March 2022 – August 2022)
Evidence gathering, including traditional economic measures across people, communities, and places across London. Looking at poverty, disadvantage, and inequality.	March 2022 to May 2022
Large scale listening exercise including polling, in depth focus groups with Londoners and government.	March 2022 to May 2022

Establish a levelling up advisory group including partners and key stakeholders.	June 2022 to August 2022
Project activity - Phase 2	Timing (June 2022 – November 2022)
Analysis of London's contribution to the UK and the interrelationships and interdependencies involved.	June 2022 to November 2022
Review of London in the wider south-east mega-region to demonstrate similar levelling up challenges.	June 2022 to November 2022

Appendices and supporting papers

- Appendix 1: Centre for London, Levelling Up and Greater London, Sponsorship Proposal

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

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:

Jeremy Skinner has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Corporate Investment Board

This decision was agreed by the Corporate Investment Board on 21 February 2021.

✓

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL SERVICES:

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

Signature



Date

23/2/22