

The Budget Committee

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The Budget Committee's general terms of reference are to examine at each stage of the consultation process the Mayor's budget proposals for the next financial year and to report to the London Assembly thereon as necessary. It can also examine, monitor and report to the London Assembly from time to time on matters relating to the budgets and performance of the Greater London Authority (GLA) and the Functional Bodies (Transport for London (TfL), Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA), London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) and the London Development Agency (LDA)).

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Chair's foreword



The London Assembly Budget Committee is again publishing a report on the work it has so far undertaken which may assist Members of the Assembly in their consideration of the Mayor's budget proposals for 2007/08, and inform wider debate.

This year the Committee has selected a number of specific topics to pursue, as well as monitoring expenditure over the course of the year (though the latter as ever lags well behind "real time" as it is dependant on the reporting timetables of the functional bodies and the GLA).

We have focused on particular issues, but the Assembly would be glad to hear from interested groups and individuals on any budgetary matters, which they consider should be raised with the Mayor, whether before or after his consultation on his budget has started. We will revisit the issues raised during our own consideration of the Mayor's draft budget.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sally Hamwee". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sally Hamwee
Chair of the Budget Committee

November 2006

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In December the Mayor will issue his draft 2007/08 budget for consultation.
- 1.2 The budget will provide for expenditure by the GLA Group (the Greater London Authority (GLA) and the four functional bodies (the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA), the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA), Transport for London (TfL) and the London Development Agency (LDA)).
- 1.3 The bulk of the Mayor's budget is funded by Government grant. Income, including from Tube and bus fares, funds around a third, and London council taxpayers, via the GLA council tax precept, fund around 8% of the budget.
- 1.4 Since the Mayor's first budget in 2001/02 the amount that Londoners have contributed through council tax precept and Tube and bus fares has increased. In 2001/02 a Londoner on council tax band D paid £123 through the council tax precept to the GLA; by 2006/07 this had more than doubled to £288.61. In 2001/02, a single zone 1 cash Tube fare cost £1.50 and a single cash bus fare cost £1; from January 2007, these will cost £4 and £2 respectively (although non-cash fares will differ).
- 1.5 The Budget Committee wants to ensure that the Mayor is using his financial resources wisely and is realising value for money from his budgets. He needs to make clear what Londoners are getting, and will get, from his budgets. To this end, the Budget Committee is seeking some basic information in the draft budget.
 - A detailed breakdown of all growth in spending for each member of the GLA Group;
 - A detailed breakdown of all savings and efficiencies for each member of the GLA Group;
 - Specific budget deliverables for each member of the GLA Group; and
 - Specific performance and outcome targets for all budget deliverables.
- 1.6 The Budget Committee has also identified some particular performance and financial issues for each member of the GLA Group that should be addressed in the draft budget. These arise from discussions at the Budget Committee (and Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee) meetings this year, and past consideration of the Mayor's budgets. As a result of the time lag with budget and performance monitoring information, the issues relate to the position as at quarter 1 2006/07.
- 1.7 Recently the Budget Committee has been focusing on a number of discrete budget-related topics and producing separate reports. Where appropriate, these reports have been referred to in this pre-budget report including the report on the financing of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.
- 1.8 The Budget Committee is not alone in having looked at resource and performance issues for the GLA Group this year. The London Assembly's other committees have also been investigating topics and making recommendations to the Mayor and functional bodies that could have budgetary implications. Details of these recommendations are appended to this report.

2. What we want to see in the Mayor's draft budget

- 2.1 The forthcoming budget will be the Mayor's seventh. It should demonstrably build upon previous budgets and performance across the GLA Group so Londoners can see clearly how their money is being used year-on-year and what they are getting, and will get, in return.
- 2.2 Earlier this year we highlighted some ways in which the Mayor could improve his consultation on the budget.¹ Building on this, we ask for the following information in the draft budget.

A detailed breakdown of all growth in spending for each member of the GLA Group

- 2.3 There has been massive growth in spending since the Mayor was first elected. In his 2001/02 budget the Mayor provided for gross expenditure of nearly £4 billion; in his 2006/07 budget, he provides for gross expenditure of almost £10 billion.
- 2.4 The Mayor has discretion over growth for new initiatives. The draft budget should provide a detailed breakdown of growth in new initiatives for every member of the GLA Group, showing how this growth links to previous growth, how it relates to the budget deliverables and what it is expected to achieve.

A detailed breakdown of all savings and efficiencies for each member of the GLA Group

- 2.5 There has been an increase in the level of savings and efficiencies sought since the Mayor was first elected. In his 2001/02 budget the Mayor required total savings and efficiencies of around £30 million (less than 1% of gross expenditure). In his 2006/07 budget, he requires total savings and efficiencies of over £250 million (2.5% of gross expenditure).
- 2.6 The draft budget should provide a clear breakdown of all savings and efficiencies, explaining how they relate to budget priorities, and their relationship to savings and efficiencies already realised.

Specific budget deliverables for each member of the GLA Group

- 2.7 Since 2003/04, there have been over 90 different policy priorities included in the Mayor's annual budget guidance. The subsequent deliverables in the budget have not always related to these priorities. The deliverables have not always had clear links to budget headings.
- 2.8 The draft budget should contain specific budget deliverables. It should be clear how they relate to budget headings and proposed areas of growth and savings and efficiencies. It should be clear how they build on the deliverables in previous budgets.

¹ Budget Committee's response to Mayor's consultation draft budget 2006/07, January 2006, page 11. The Budget Committee's proposals to improve budget consultation included: set out in detail budgetary uncertainties and the options being considered; invite respondents to answer specific questions in relation to budget proposals; ensure consistent presentation of budgetary information; give details of what is meant by terms such as "savings and efficiencies"; and avoid obscure budget headings for individual budget lines.

Performance targets for all the budget deliverables

- 2.9 There has been a range of performance information produced since the Mayor was first elected. However, it has not always directly related to the deliverables in his annual budget and in the GLA and functional bodies' corporate plans.
- 2.10 The draft budget should have a target for each budget deliverable and details of anticipated outcomes. Subsequent quarterly budget and performance monitoring information should relate to these targets and outcomes so that it is possible to identify clearly the extent to which budget deliverables are being achieved.

3. Issues for the MPA

Performance

- 3.1 In his 2006/07 budget the Mayor provided for the MPA to meet the cost of maintaining its current level of activity and resources for eight specific deliverables.² Our work to date has focused on performance against some of these deliverables.

Deliverable: complete the implementation of community based policing with dedicated neighbourhood teams equal to the number of wards in each of the 32 boroughs by March 2007

- 3.2 At the end of June 2006 progress on this deliverable was as follows. Whilst the number of Safer Neighbourhood Teams (630) exceeded the total number of wards (624), not every ward had a team. The 630 teams were split between 589 wards³, leaving 35 wards without teams.
- 3.3 The MPS has told us that each ward will have a team by 31 December 2006 and that each team will have at least six staff (1 sergeant, 2 police constables and 3 Police and Community Support Officers (PCSOs)). We welcome the intention to have a team of six in every ward ahead of March 2007. However, we are aware that this will present challenges.
- 3.4 It is unlikely that the target will be met from the recruitment of new PCSOs alone. Although the overall aim is to near double the number of PCSOs from 2,390 in June 2006 to 4,486 by April 2007, recent data suggests this is ambitious. For example, between quarter 4 2005/06 and quarter 1 2006/07, the total number of PCSOs increased by just 82 from 2,308 to 2,390.⁴ The MPS has told us that it is running the biggest recruitment campaign in London ever to attract PCSOs⁵, with a rate of one in four applicants recruited as a PCSO. However, it has also reported that it may have to meet the December target by shifting staff from other duties and then back-fill the vacancies.⁶
- 3.5 Our work on Safer Neighbourhoods is on-going. The teams receive considerable funding from the GLA council tax precept so we have held a separate meeting on the impact of the teams to date and their value for money.⁷ We intend to publish a report with our findings and recommendations shortly.

² GLA Consolidated Budget 2006/07, page 1

³ Report to Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee meeting on 12 October 2006, Functional Bodies' quarterly monitoring report, page 18

⁴ Ibid, page 23

⁵ Transcript of Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee meeting on 12 October 2006, page 11

⁶ Ibid, page 16

⁷ See agenda for Budget Committee meeting on 9 November 2006

Deliverable: increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the MPS, shifting more resources to frontline policing

- 3.6 As of June 2006, it was difficult to identify any real progress against this deliverable.
- 3.7 In financial terms there has been no clear identification of more resources released to frontline policing. In fact the MPA has forecast that it would fall short of its 2006/07 savings target of £68.3 million by 22%.⁸
- 3.8 In workforce terms there is some evidence of fewer police officers than in previous years. In June 2005 there were 31,141 police officers and 13,661 police staff.⁹ By June 2006 the number of police officers had decreased to 30,734 and the number of police staff had increased to 13,813.¹⁰ Whereas in past budgets the focus has been on increasing police officer numbers to improve policing in London, the emphasis now appears to have shifted to looking at the impact of the entire police workforce, which we support. The MPS told us that whilst “there is an automatic assumption....that more police officers will automatically mean safer communities”, in fact “a significant number of the roles which are done that make people feel safer, are not necessarily done by police officers.”¹¹

Deliverable: continue to work to create a workforce that reflects the diversity of London

- 3.9 At the end of June 2006 there was mixed performance against this deliverable. Although the drive to recruit more PCSOs presents an opportunity to improve the diversity of the workforce, the composition of PCSOs has not yet changed significantly.
- 3.10 The percentage of PCSOs who are women increased only slightly from 32.4% in quarter 3 2005/06 to 33.5% in quarter 1 2006/07.¹² Over the same period, the percentage of PCSOs who are from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities actually decreased from 37.1% to 34.9%.¹³ The MPS has told us that PCSOs are the most representative part of its workforce but the size and scale of the PCSO recruitment required might mean that PCSOs are not as directly representative of Londoners as desired.¹⁴ We will continue to monitor this issue.

⁸ Report to Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee meeting on 12 October 2006, Functional Bodies’ quarterly monitoring report, page 33

⁹ Ibid, page 23

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ Transcript of Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee meeting on 12 October 2006, page 10

¹² Report to Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee meeting on 12 October 2006, Functional Bodies’ quarterly monitoring report, page 24

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ Transcript of Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee meeting on 12 October 2006, page 17

Financial

3.11 The Mayor requires the MPA to prepare budget plans for 2007/08 that result in an annual increase in net revenue expenditure of 3% over the 2006/07 amount in the Mayor's published budget. The MPA is also to advise what it would do if the increase in net revenue expenditure was to be 1% more or less than the 3% increase.¹⁵

3.12 We have heard from the MPA that it is working to the Mayor's target but there are some pressures. In October 2006 these included a 2007/08 budget gap of £20 million, a forecast overspend of £22 million on the 2006/07 revenue budget and an additional cost of £20 million this year arising from Operation Overt (police work relating to the alleged plot to blow up an aeroplane over Heathrow).¹⁶ We support the MPA in seeking funding from the Home Office to cover the costs of Operation Overt. We also support its on-going work, with the MPS, to reduce the budget gap and forecast overspend.

3.13 In the past we have highlighted a number of variances in MPA budget lines that we hope to see addressed in the context of the forecast 2006/07 budget overspend.

- There has been an overspend on the police officer overtime budget each year. Although the overspend has reduced - from 27% of the police officer overtime budget in 2001/02 to 9.6 % of the budget in 2005/06 – there has been a forecast overspend in 2006/07 of 9.6% on the budget.¹⁷
- Last year there was an overspend on the supplies and service budget of £17.4 million (4% of the budget). At the end of June 2006, the forecast was for a similar overspend this year (£17 million or 4% of the budget).¹⁸
- In the last two years there have been overspends on MPA transport costs. Last year this overspend was £20.9 million (41% of the budget).¹⁹

¹⁵ Mayor's Budget Guidance 2007/08, page 6

¹⁶ Transcript of Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee meeting on 12 October 2006, pages 19 - 21

¹⁷ Report to Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee meeting on 12 October 2006, Functional Bodies' quarterly monitoring report, page 34

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ Report to Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee meeting on 26 July 2006, Functional Bodies' quarterly monitoring report, Appendix A

4. Issues for LFEPA

Performance

- 4.1 The Mayor's 2006/07 budget for LFEPA was to lead to further significant improvements in the safety and security of all Londoners. LFEPA was to build on existing achievements and had 10 specific budget deliverables.²⁰ Our work to date has focused on performance against some of these deliverables.

Deliverable: complete, with partners, 100,000 home fire safety checks and install 100,000 smoke alarms in the homes of vulnerable Londoners

- 4.2 At the end of June 2006, there had been some progress in meeting this deliverable but it remains ambitious. Between March 2005 and June 2006 a total of 37,293 home fire safety checks were completed²¹ – 63% less than the target. Somewhere in the region of 20,000 smoke alarms have been installed this year²² – only one-fifth of the target.

- 4.3 LFEPA has told us that it will be undertaking 35,000 home fires safety checks itself this year and working with partners such as London boroughs and housing associations to deliver more checks and install detectors to realise the targets.²³ We welcome the commitment to meet the targets. We have asked for further information on the contract between LFEPA and its partners to better understand how partners will deliver on their targets.

Deliverable: continue to work to create a workforce that reflects the diversity of London

- 4.4 At the end of June 2006, the make up of LFEPA's workforce was similar to that for the whole of 2005/06 and below all the targets. For example, the percentage of all uniformed operational staff who were from BME communities was 9.4% compared to a target of 11%. The percentage who were women was 3.1% compared to a target of 5%.²⁴

- 4.5 One of the Mayor's 2007/08 budget priorities for LFEPA is improving the rate of progress towards a workforce that reflects the diversity of London.²⁵ LFEPA has reported that it is making steady progress. It held a national campaign earlier this year to attract female applicants and now has 310 women going through the recruitment process.²⁶ We hope to see the benefits of such work reflected in future breakdowns of LFEPA's workforce.

Financial

- 4.6 The Mayor requires LFEPA to prepare a budget for 2007/08 that results in an annual increase in net revenue expenditure of 3% over the 2006/07 amount in the

²⁰ GLA Consolidated Budget 2006/07, page 1

²¹ Report to Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee meeting on 12 October 2006, Functional Bodies' quarterly monitoring report, page 6

²² Transcript of Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee meeting on 12 October 2006, page 3

²³ Ibid

²⁴ Report to Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee meeting on 12 October 2006, Functional Bodies' quarterly monitoring report,, page 24

²⁵ Mayor's Budget Guidance 2007/8, page 15

²⁶ Transcript of Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee meeting on 12 October 2006, page 5

Mayor's published budget. LFEPA is also to advise what it would do if the increase in net revenue expenditure was to be 1% more or less than the 3% increase.²⁷

4.7 LFEPA has submitted an indicative 2007/08 budget estimate to the Mayor requiring an annual increase in net revenue expenditure of 3.5%²⁸ but is seeking to reduce this. In October 2006 it told us of some factors that may make a reduction difficult. There is a need to cover London Resilience costs (the indicative budget estimate includes the cost of additional London Resilience of £6.9 million). There is considerable use of reserves already built into the indicative budget estimate. External consultants are undertaking a review of LFEPA but have not yet identified any further areas for significant savings.²⁹

4.8 We support on-going work to reduce the budget insofar as this is possible. In the past we have highlighted a number of issues with LFEPA's budget.

- There has been a growing use of reserves to offset LFEPA's call on the council tax precept but the long-term implications of such use of reserves are unclear. At the end of quarter 1 2006/07, LFEPA forecast to increase its reserves this year by £6.6 million (14% of the budget) due to the greater underspend in 2005/06 than originally projected.³⁰ At the end of quarter 1 2006/7, LFEPA had also forecast an underspend for this year of £3 million (0.8% of its revenue budget).³¹
- Rising costs from London Resilience has put pressures on LFEPA's budget. Last year we stated that it was unacceptable that LFEPA should have to meet the full additional cost arising from enhanced resilience from its own reserves and that, instead, Government should fund this. Recently the London Assembly agreed a motion calling on the Mayor and the Chair of LFEPA to lead an all-Party delegation to meet with the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and demand that the Government meets the full costs of additional resilience measures via central grant.³²
- There have been budgetary uncertainties arising from the need to meet pension provisions. At the end of quarter 1 2006/07, LFEPA had forecast an underspend of £2.5 million on firefighter pensions for this year (14% of the budget). It has told us that new financing arrangements for pensions that came into effect in April 2006 have led to a significant saving built into the 2007/08 budget but there remains an issue with the number of ill-health retirements. There may be a need to pay up to four times the salary to Government for each ill-health retirement.³³

²⁷ Mayor's Budget Guidance 2007/8, page 6

²⁸ Minutes of LFEPA Authority meeting on 21 September 2006

²⁹ Transcript of Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee meeting on 12 October 2006, page 7

³⁰ Report to Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee meeting on 12 October 2006, Functional Bodies' quarterly monitoring report, page 37

³¹ Ibid, page 38

³² Motion agreed by London Assembly at its plenary meeting on 8 November 2006

³³ Transcript of Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee meeting on 12 October 2006, page 9

5. Issues for TfL

Performance

5.1 The Mayor's 2006/07 budget for TfL was based around TfL's investment programme and Business Plan, with eight key deliverables.³⁴ To date, we have focused in-depth on one of these deliverables.

Deliverable: Building on the Oyster ticketing product in order to reduce costs and serve customers better

5.2 Fares income is an important source of funding for the Mayor's budget; in 2006/07 Tube and bus fares income will fund almost a quarter of the GLA Group's total expenditure.³⁵ Earlier this year we examined the Mayor's fares policy in more detail including the use of Oyster card. We published a report in September 2006 that set out our findings.³⁶

5.3 We are concerned that there is low take up of Oyster cards amongst Londoners in the lowest socio-economic groups. We have recommended that the Mayor and TfL undertake further research into the take up of Oyster cards and pay-as-you go Oyster cards to identify fully any barriers to take up. We have asked for regular reporting on steps being taken to address any barriers. We have also provided suggestions for ways in which Oyster card take up might be improved.

5.4 In his response to these points, the Mayor has indicated TfL is undertaking extensive research in order to understand why and where people still use cash and not Oyster cards. He has said that he would be happy to update the Assembly on this. We look forward to receiving this update in due course.

5.5 We also highlighted the Mayor's lack of formal consultation on his annual fare changes. We recommended that the TfL Board should hold at least one public meeting a year where fares policy is discussed and where stakeholders are invited to give their views.

5.6 In his response on this point, the Mayor told us that the setting of fares and fare policy is his responsibility and not that of the TfL Board. He said that his manifestos and Transport Strategy set out the key fare policy commitments and that, where circumstances have changed, comprehensive consultation with stakeholders has been carried out. We are disappointed with this response. Others who have responded to our report have told us that they are particularly supportive of our call for the Mayor to undertake annual consultation on fares.³⁷

³⁴ GLA Consolidated Budget 2006/07, page 1

³⁵ The Mayor's 2006/7 budget provides for £9.644 billion gross expenditure by the GLA Group. Underground traffic income is forecast at £1.34 billion and bus network income is forecast at slightly over £1 billion (see GLA Consolidated Budget 2006/07, page 15)

³⁶ <http://www.london.gov.uk/assembly/reports/budget/fares-rpt.pdf>

³⁷ See agenda item [to be completed] for Budget Committee meeting on 22 November 2006

Financial

- 5.7 The Mayor has asked TfL to prepare 2007/08 budget plans with no change to the published forecast budget requirement.³⁸ TfL has recently published details of its 2007/08 business plan, which sets out a call on the council tax precept of £12 million – the same level as in 2006/07.³⁹
- 5.8 A call of £12 million on the council tax precept is hard to justify when TfL's income has been above budget, and operating expenditure below budget, in recent years.
- In 2004/05 TfL's income was £67 million (2.6%) higher than budget.⁴⁰ In 2005/06 it was £91 million (3.3%) higher than budget. At quarter 1 2006/07 TfL forecast income higher than budget by £32 million (1%) for this year.⁴¹
 - In 2004/05 TfL's operating expenditure was £81million (2%) below budget. In 2005/06 it was £104 million (2%) below budget. At quarter 1 2006/07 TfL forecast operating expenditure below budget by £61 million (1%) for this year.⁴²
- 5.9 It is also difficult to justify TfL's call on the council tax precept when there have been recent underspends on capital expenditure. In 2005/06, net capital expenditure was below budget by £28 million (5%). At quarter 1 2006/07 there was a year-to-date underspend of £19 million (18% of the budget).⁴³ Previously TfL has told us that a full time oversight function team has been set up to monitor the progress of the capital investment programme.⁴⁴ We are keen to ensure progress is made and underspends do not persist. We will continue to look closely at this part of TfL's budget.
- 5.10 Although minor in the context of TfL's multi-billion pound budget, there are two areas of discretionary expenditure where TfL could make reductions.
1. TfL has overspent on advertising, marketing and communications in each of the last four years. In 2005/6 there was an overspend of £14 million (22% of the budget). At quarter 1 2006/07 there was an overspend of £9 million (64% of the year to date budget).⁴⁵
 2. TfL has recently overspent on professional and consultancy fees. In 2005/6 there was an overspend of £3 million (3% of the budget). At quarter 1 2006/07 there was a forecast overspend of £15 million for the year (12% of the budget).⁴⁶

³⁸ Mayor's Budget Guidance 2006/7, page 6

³⁹ Report to TfL Board meeting on 25 October 2006, TfL Business Plan & Investment Programme, page 8

⁴⁰ Report to Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee on 7 July 2005, GLA Group quarterly performance 2004/5, page 30

⁴¹ Report to Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee meeting on 12 October 2006, Functional Bodies' quarterly monitoring report, page 44

⁴² Ibid

⁴³ Ibid

⁴⁴ Transcript of Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee on 25 April 2006, page 20

⁴⁵ Report to Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee meeting on 12 October 2006, Functional Bodies' quarterly monitoring report, page 44

⁴⁶ Ibid

6. Issues for the LDA

Performance

6.1 The Mayor's 2006/07 budget for LDA has provided resources for fifteen key deliverables grouped under four headings - London's Places and Infrastructure, London's People, London's Enterprises and London's Marketing and Promotion.⁴⁷ To date, we have focused in-depth on one of these deliverables.

Deliverable: to maintain, develop and promote London as a visitor destination and ensure a coherent approach to marketing and promoting London to deliver real growth in visitor spending and growth in domestic and international visitors over the economic cycle

6.2 Promoting tourism in London is important and in recent years the GLA Group has spent more on this activity. Between 2003/04 and 2005/06 its expenditure grew by 23%.⁴⁸ Earlier this year we examined in detail what had been spent on tourism and what this had achieved. We published our findings in a report in June 2006.⁴⁹

6.3 The LDA leads on GLA Group work on tourism but we found that expenditure was not clearly co-ordinated and members of the GLA Group used different definitions of tourism. We found it difficult to determine the value for money of activities such as London TV and short-term promotional campaigns. We also identified that some stakeholders were unaware of how the GLA Group was measuring the success of its work on tourism and did not know what it was spending.

6.4 We have made recommendations to the Mayor and the LDA about the need to be clearer about what each member of the GLA Group is spending on tourism, how this spending is co-ordinated across the GLA Group and how it is measured. We have suggested an independent cost/benefit analysis of London TV be undertaken. We have also suggested that work be done on identifying better measurements and evaluation of tourism, and that the LDA should inform stakeholders about its expenditure on tourism.

Financial

6.5 The Mayor has asked the LDA to prepare 2007/08 budget plans with no change to the published forecast budget requirement i.e. no call on the council tax precept.⁵⁰

6.6 We remain concerned about the impact of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games on the LDA's budget and non-Games related work. In 2005/06, as a result of the Games, the LDA overspent on its total budget by £15.3 million (4%). There were underspends on 11 of its 16 programme budgets. The LDA has told us that no programmes were cut to fund the Games, that there was "natural slippage" and that money will be returned to programme budgets in 2006/07.⁵¹ We want to ensure

⁴⁷ GLA Consolidated Budget 2006/07, page 1

⁴⁸ The members of the GLA Group that spend money on tourism are the London Development Agency (LDA), Transport for London (TfL) and the Greater London Authority (GLA). In 2003/4, the total spent by the GLA Group was £27.55m and in 2005/6 it was £33.85m

⁴⁹ <http://www.london.gov.uk/assembly/reports/budget/tourism.pdf>

⁵⁰ Mayor's Budget Guidance 2007/08, page 6

⁵¹ Transcript of Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee on 25 April 2006, page 2

that this is the case and will continue to monitor this issue. This issue has also been highlighted in our separate report on the financing of the Games. In that report, we call for regular information on how much is being spent on the Games and what it is paying for. We also recommend that the Mayor includes in his draft budget full details of all Games-related expenditure by each member of the GLA Group.⁵²

6.7 In the past we have highlighted other issues with the LDA's budget, as set out below, that should be addressed in the Mayor's draft budget.

- The extent to which savings and efficiencies have been achieved. Last year the LDA identified four key areas for efficiency savings (streamlining support services, legal and consultancy, marketing and research, and programme duplication).⁵³
- The growing use of temporary and consultancy staff. Between quarters 3 and 4 2005/06, the number of temporary agency staff increased at the LDA by 33% and the number of consultants increased by 250%.⁵⁴
- The frequent changes to budget headings and the profiling of programme expenditure equally across the quarters when in fact the LDA usually spends most money in the final quarter. These issues have made it difficult to understand what the LDA is spending on each activity from one year to the next. They also make it difficult to relate the LDA's expenditure to performance.

⁵² Budget Committee's scrutiny reports are available at:

<http://www.london.gov.uk/assembly/reports/budget.jsp>

⁵³ Report to Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee on 12 January 2006, GLA Group quarterly performance 2005/6, page 21

⁵⁴ Report to Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee meeting on 26 July 2006, Functional Bodies' quarterly monitoring report, Appendix D

7. Issues for the GLA

GLA Group integration

- 7.1 In his 2007/08 Budget Guidance the Mayor has asked for the GLA and the functional bodies to address the priority of “improving performance through close integration across the GLA Group, including better alignment of policies, branding and budgets to mayoral strategies and policies, and collaborative working to improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness and reduce duplication.”⁵⁵
- 7.2 In our responses to the Mayor’s last two budgets, we have highlighted the potential for savings derived from cross-GLA Group working. Earlier this year we held a specific meeting to reflect on the considerable work to date by the GLA Group to develop cross-Group working. We also discussed the framework that has been developed to take forward further integration. There are eight areas selected for initial work:
1. external communications (including marketing and market research);
 2. Research and analytical services (e.g. geographic, census and economy-based information);
 3. Promoting London including major events;
 4. Equalities;
 5. Environmental issues (i.e. climate change, urban design);
 6. Sustainable procurement;
 7. E-Government (including London Portal); and
 8. Common services.⁵⁶
- 7.3 We welcome the framework for integration. We recognise that there is a need for a sound business case for any specific proposal for greater integration but we also consider that financial savings are a key reason for pursuing greater integration. They should be central to any specific proposals. From our discussion, we noted that the main driver is not necessarily realising financial savings but rather the Mayor’s wish to have more influence over members of the GLA Group and ensure that they follow his vision.
- 7.4 We want to see in the draft budget details of any specific proposals for greater integration. These should include details of any initial financial investment and all the anticipated benefits, including potential financial savings. Thereafter, we would like to receive regular reports updating us on progress being made on this issue.

Review of Powers for the Mayor

- 7.5 The Government announced new powers for the Mayor in July 2006. These include new lead roles for the Mayor on housing and adult skills in London; a strengthened role over planning in the capital; and additional strategic powers in respect of waste, culture and sport, health, climate change and appointments to the boards of the functional bodies. As a result of the Government’s announcement, the number of mandatory mayoral strategies will increase from eight to 13.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Mayor’s Budget Guidance 2007/08, page 11

⁵⁶ Appendix to report at item 5 on agenda for Budget Committee meeting on 20 July 2006 (MA form 2687, “Delivering better services through integration”, 22 May 2006), page 7

⁵⁷ Report to Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee meeting on 12 October 2006, GLA quarterly monitoring report, page 2

7.6 The new powers for the Mayor will have resource implications that have not, as yet, been fully detailed. Nevertheless work is happening across the GLA Group in anticipation of these powers. We want to see in the draft budget full details of all expenditure and staff across the GLA Group allocated to this new activity.

Performance and financial issues

7.7 More detailed comments about specific performance and financial issues for the GLA are covered in Appendix 1 of this report. This sets out our response to the Mayor on the core GLA draft budget 2007/08.

8. Follow-up

8.1 The Budget Committee will revisit the issues raised in this pre-budget report in January 2007 when it responds formally to the Mayor's draft budget.

Appendix 1: Text of response to the Mayor on the core GLA draft budget 2007/08, 1 December 2006

Dear Ken

Following the Budget Committee's consideration of the draft GLA Corporate Plan 2007-10 at its meeting on 22 November 2006, I write to provide you with the Assembly's response.

Your guideline financial limit

It is disappointing that you have not yet been able to meet your own guideline financial limit of an annual increase in GLA net revenue expenditure (excluding election costs) of 3% over the 2006-07 amount in your published budget.

At face value, the proposed net revenue expenditure of £121.397 million represents a 3.2% increase. However, this includes £57.7 million of council tax contribution for the Olympics Funding Agreement (OFA), which is money that the GLA will be collecting and passing on to the Olympic Delivery Authority. If the OFA is excluded from the figures, your proposed 2007-08 budget provides for an increase of over 6% in net revenue expenditure by the GLA.

We consider that more could be done to justify such an increase in expenditure by the GLA. We are keen to ensure that there has been a systematic, rigorous testing of the proposed growth and that efforts have been made to identify all potential savings and efficiencies.

Increase in staffing

The bulk of the proposed growth of £1.899 million is to fund a net increase of 41.1 posts in 2007/08. This is a significant increase in staff that will add pressures to accommodation at City Hall and should be re-examined in light of these pressures.

Some of the proposed posts relate to the extension of your powers. At this stage, it may still be unclear what additional work will derive from your new powers and we are keen to ensure that there is a proper case for each proposed post. We are also keen to ensure the extra cost of any additional work is met by Government funding. As such, we welcome the Government providing additional grant for housing powers and hope further resources from Government will be secured.

Some of the proposed posts relate to the 2012 Games. Last year, when you proposed additional GLA staff relating to the Games, you told us that you saw "no justification for any further increase in staffing levels [in relation to the Games] in the remaining six years."⁵⁸ In light of this, we would like you to explain why there is now a need for further Games-related staff at the GLA. Previously we have been advised that the GLA will spend a total of £2.369 million between 2006-07 to 2008-09 on Games-related staff and programme budgets.⁵⁹ Given all the other organisations that are working on the Games, we consider more should be done to justify this expenditure.

Some of the proposed posts relate to press, media, marketing and events. There appears to have been a considerable increase in the number of press, media, marketing and events

⁵⁸ Transcript of Budget Committee meeting on 15 December 2005, page 44

⁵⁹ Report to Budget Committee meeting on 19 October 2006, Financial information on the preparations for the 2012 Games

staff in your office and in the Media & Marketing directorate since 2001, without a full explanation for why such an increase is necessary. We have requested further information on the numbers of press, media, marketing and events staff and the monitoring and assessments made of their work.

We note that the proposed increase in staff in your office would cause you to be outside the 5% tolerance on the ring fenced staffing budget. As you will be aware, the Assembly has yet to use any of its tolerance provision.

Refining programme budgets

We welcome the proposed cash freeze on programme budgets. However, we consider that there might be scope for further refinement of programme budgets in light of annual underspends. In 2004/05, £812,000 from GLA programme budgets was not spent and carried forward. In 2005/06, £405,000 from GLA programme budgets was not spent and carried forward.

Your office's proposed 2007-08 programme budgets include £200,000 for Slave Trade Abolition. Without diminishing the importance of the abolition of slavery, we question whether London council taxpayers alone should fund the implementation and promotion of events to mark the bicentenary of the abolition. We believe external resources could be obtained to offset this proposed expenditure and have asked for further details of any work being done to secure such resources.

Further savings and efficiencies

It is disappointing that, at this stage, you have not been able to identify more than £231,000 of savings and efficiencies for the 2007/08 budget. Last year you were able to identify more than three times this level of savings and efficiencies (£800,000).

We consider more could be done to demonstrate that the GLA is operating in an efficient and effective way to make the best use of its resources. If, as reported, the GLA's work with partners is allowing efficiencies to be realised by organisations other than the GLA⁶⁰, examples could be given. If, as reported, non-cashable efficiencies are being delivered through a programme of efficiency reviews⁶¹, further details of these efficiencies could be provided.

The first phase of the GLA Group convergence programme is now underway and we are keen to receive further information. Last year you told us that you thought it would be a very good time to look at building into the budget over 2006/07 real savings from economies of scale.⁶² We are keen to ensure that any specific proposals for further GLA Group convergence are included in your consultation draft budget 2007-08, with clear details of the savings anticipated.

Assessing the impact of GLA expenditure

Finally, we would like more information on how you will be measuring the impact of GLA expenditure next year.

⁶⁰ Draft GLA Corporate Plan 2007-10, Annex B Submission Summary, page 7

⁶¹ Draft GLA Corporate Plan 2007-10, Annex B Submission Summary, page 7

⁶² Transcript of Budget Committee meeting on 15 December 2005, page 18

The draft GLA corporate plan 2007-10 includes over 120 different principles, themes, aims, objectives and deliverables. It provides few details of measurable outcomes. The appendix of performance indicators does not include current levels of performance, and the changes in performance sought, making it difficult to see how you would use the indicators to measure the impact of the GLA's expenditure and work. We hope your consultation draft budget will include clear budget deliverables for the GLA for 2007-08, with measurable outcomes.

We look forward to further information, as per our suggestions, in your forthcoming consultation draft budget.

Yours sincerely

Sally Hamwee
Chair, Budget Committee

Cc: Neale Coleman, Director of Business Planning and Regeneration, Mayor's Office, GLA
Anne McMeel, Executive Director of Finance and Performance, GLA

Appendix 2: Budget deliverables included in the GLA consolidated budget 2006/07

MPA⁶³

- Complete the implementation of community based policing with dedicated neighbourhood teams equal to the number of wards in each of the 32 boroughs by March 2007, to provide a visible, familiar and accessible police presence to tackle public disorder and anti-social behaviour and to reduce the fear of crime;
- Protect the capital against future terrorist attacks;
- Reduce the number of victims in London of violent crime, hate crime, rape and sexual offending;
- Improve safety on London's roads, on public transport and at transport interchanges;
- Increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the Metropolitan Police Service, shifting more resources to front-line policing;
- Reduce anti-social behaviour and create a safer environment;
- Build public confidence in the criminal justice system through increasing the number of successful convictions and supporting victims and witnesses.
- Continue to work to create a workforce that reflects the diversity of London.

LFEPA⁶⁴

- Introduce six new Fire Rescue Units to enhance LFEPA's capability to respond to major incidents such as terrorist attacks on the capital and minimise loss of life;
- Build on the success of the Arson Reduction Task Force – and further reduce the number of deliberate fires in abandoned vehicles and other arson attempts that can cause misery and undermine Londoners sense of safety and security;
- Reduce accidental fires in people's homes to 21 fires per 10,000 population;
- Reduce the number of deaths in the home from accidental fire to fewer than 55 – a ratio of 0.73 per 100,000 population;
- Expand the Juvenile Firesetters Intervention Scheme – the effective prevention programme with young fire setters. Currently around one in four fires in London is started by a child, LFEPA aim to bring this figure down;
- Complete, with partners, 100,000 home fire safety checks (target subject to consultation);
- Install 100,000 smoke alarms in the homes of vulnerable Londoners (target subject to consultation);
- Give every fire-fighter enhanced first aid training;
- Start a programme to fit defibrillators to every fire appliance with staff trained in their use so firefighters can help people having a heart attack and save more Londoners lives;
- Continue to work to create a workforce that reflects the diversity of London.

GLA⁶⁵

- Expanding and improving transport provision in London;

⁶³ GLA consolidated budget 2006/07, page 1

⁶⁴ Ibid, page 5

⁶⁵ GLA consolidated budget 2006/07, page 8

- Improving public safety;
- Delivering sustainable economic growth within a changing global marketplace;
- Promoting London at home and abroad as a world class city;
- Supporting the delivery of a successful 2012 Olympics and Paralympics;
- Removing inequality and increasing social inclusion;
- Increasing housing supply and reducing homelessness;
- Meeting the challenge of global warming and improving London's environment in a sustainable way.

TfL⁶⁶

- Ongoing service improvements across the network, including additional train services operated, increased bus kilometres operated and line extensions on the DLR;
- Improving customer information through technology, including providing updated travel information via text to mobile phone and increasing travel information boards at stations;
- Reducing injuries and death on the roads through both engineering improvements and marketing campaigns targeted at those most at risk, in particular, teenagers;
- Continuing station improvements focused on increasing the capacity at congested spots and making the tube accessible for disabled people, the elderly and parents with children and pushchairs;
- Building new links and extensions, particularly in East London to support the Olympics and Paralympics and growth in the Thames Gateway;
- Funding environmental improvements and sustainable modes, with particular focus on reducing vehicle emissions and energy consumption, and establishing, subject to consultation, the London Low Emissions Zone. Also, encouraging walking and cycling schemes, and putting plans in place to further reduce car use;
- Developing major projects such as the Thames Gateway Bridge, tram schemes and interchanges;
- Building on the Oyster ticketing product in order to reduce costs and serve customers better.

LDA⁶⁷

London's Places and Infrastructure

- To facilitate housing units to support London's future growth and development in the Thames Gateway (including seeking to achieve a 50 per cent affordable housing target);
- To remediate and/or invest in reclaiming and redeveloping brownfield land;
- To lever in private regeneration infrastructure;
- To play a crucial role in delivering the Games through land assembly and regeneration initiatives, and to work with the Mayor and other partners to develop a training and enterprise support for local people and businesses in the Lower Lea Valley and Thames Gateway and ensure legacy benefits are shared by all. This will include work to enhance the environmental sustainability of the city.

⁶⁶ GLA consolidated budget 2006/07, page 12

⁶⁷ Ibid, pages 18-19

London's People

- To bring people into jobs;
- To support the creation of new affordable childcare places;
- To support adults to gain basic skills as a part of the Skills for Life Strategy that count towards the skills PSA target;
- To support adults in the workforce who lack full level 2 skills or equivalent to achieve at least full level 2 or equivalent as a result of LDA programmes;
- To assist people in their skills development as a result of LDA programmes;
- To create maximum benefit from the Games in terms of skills and local procurement and ensure that London makes best use of its talent pool by working towards reducing sexist, racist and other prejudices.

London's Enterprises

- To provide support to businesses to improve their performance and to use the impact of the Games to benefit London as a scientific and high-tech centre;
- To create or attract new businesses and which demonstrate growth after 12 months;
- To create or safeguard jobs.

London's Marketing and Promotion

- To maintain, develop and promote London as a visitor destination and ensure a coherent approach to marketing and promoting London to deliver real growth in visitor spending and growth in domestic and international visitors over the economic cycle;
- To link the Agency's international and promotional work with the Olympics and Paralympics legacy work and the economic consequences of globalisation as a result of the opportunity given by the Olympics and Paralympics. This will ensure London's economy derives maximum benefit in terms of tourism, inward investment, attraction of foreign students and other business activities.

Appendix 3: Details of some recommendations made by the London Assembly's committees in 2006 that may relate to expenditure and use of resources by the GLA Group

7 July Review Committee

"Report of the 7 July Review Committee", June 2006

Recommendations included that:

- TfL conduct a study of possible interim solutions to increase the reliability and resilience of radio communications between train drivers and line controllers;
- TfL conduct a feasibility study to assess the costs and effectiveness of Personal Role Radios and other available technologies to enable communications for emergency and transport services in underground stations and tunnels;
- TfL grant the Emergency Response Unit automatic access to bus lanes and an automatic exemption from the Congestion Charge;
- The Emergency Response Unit obtain Airwave radios to be able to communicate underground once the CONNECT project is completed;
- TfL/London Underground Ltd should produce a plan for provision of basic first aid kits on trains and at stations, in time for the 2007/08 budget-setting process;
- TfL conduct a feasibility study on alternative forms of emergency lighting for new/ refurbished rolling stock;
- TfL review the potential for providing torches in drivers' cabs for use in the event of loss of lighting and failure of emergency lights;
- TfL consider whether it would be practicable to carry basic first aid kits on buses, and Network Rail operators should produce plans for provision of first-aid kits for public use (and for use by qualified first-aiders) at mainline railway stations and on trains;
- TfL install clearly visible safety notices inside the carriages on all Tube trains, instructing passengers what to do in case of emergency; and
- London Underground Limited, train operating companies and TfL identify at least two potential survivor reception centres close to Tube stations, overground rail stations and major bus stations in central London. They should then liaise with the owners/occupiers of those sites and involve them in emergency planning processes and exercises.

Economic Development, Culture, Sport and Tourism Committee

"Review of the LDA's Childcare Programme" report, June 2006

Recommendations included that the LDA:

- include in the Childcare Affordability Programme further specific provision to fund and support childcare places for disabled children and those with special health and behavioural needs;
- include in its business and skills programme specific initiatives designed to increase the availability of skilled childcare workers in London;
- conduct a strategic mapping exercise to show existing childcare provision and need across London; and
- provide funding and support for training of childcare workers in business planning and administration skills.

“The London Cultural Consortium” report, July 2006

Recommendations included that the London Cultural Consortium should have dedicated staff reporting to the Chair of the consortium, ensuring a clear distinction from the Mayor’s office.

“London Olympic and Paralympic Games: A sporting legacy for people with disabilities”, September 2006

Recommendations included that TfL should set up a travel hotline to help callers with disabilities plan their journey and there should be a one stop shop website for information on opportunities for sportspeople with disabilities.

“Film Friendly London” report, November 2006

Recommendations included that TfL, working with the London Filming Partnership, should identify a simplified way of paying the Congestion Charge, workable for film makers on location.

Environment Committee

“Dash for Homes?: A report on the environmental aspects of the Mayor’s planning decisions” report, March 2006

Recommendations included that officers in the Mayor’s Planning Decision Unit and Environment Team receive training on a regular basis addressing the full range of strategic environmental policy, including resolving tensions between different environmental objectives.

“Offside: The loss of London’s playing fields” report, May 2006

Recommendations included a forum be developed to encourage dialogue between the GLA, Association of London Government, Sports England, the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games, the Olympic Delivery Body, other key stakeholders and private owners of playing fields to increase access.

“Buying Recycled” report, June 2006

Recommendations included that:

- the LDA work with its delivery partner to develop a methodology to ensure that the contribution of code signatories to green procurement is captured;
- London Remade set up a brokerage service to establish buying consortia;
- The LDA and London Remade should work together to re-design a less complicated Green Procurement Code information pack;
- The LDA should work with boroughs and trade associations in preparing a publicity/marketing campaign aimed at encouraging more small businesses to buy recycled goods.

“A lot to lose: London’s disappearing allotments”, October 2006

Recommendations included that geographical information on London’s allotments be made available on the Your London portal, allowing Londoners to locate the sites nearest to them.

Health and Public Services Committee

“An urgent need - the state of London’s public toilets” report, March 2006

Recommendations included that the Mayor and local authorities produce a London-wide public toilet map, showing the locations of all toilets.

Appendix 4: Information gathered by the Budget Committee

The Budget Committee and Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee meetings held since March 2006 have informed this pre-budget report. Dates of meetings, and the main items considered, are set out below.

- 16 March 2006: Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee. The main item was quarter 3 2005/06 budget and performance monitoring information for MPA, LFEPA and GLA
- 21 March 2006: Budget Committee. The main item was GLA Group expenditure on tourism. A separate scrutiny report was issued in June 2006.
- 25 April 2006: Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee. The main item was quarter 3 2005/06 budget and performance monitoring information for TfL and LDA.
- 22 June 2006: Budget Committee. The main item was Tube and bus fares. A separate scrutiny report was issued in September 2006.
- 20 July 2006: Budget Committee. The main item was cross-GLA Group working.
- 26 July 2006: Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee. The main item was quarter 4 2005/06 budget and performance monitoring information for the GLA Group (focusing on TfL, LDA and GLA).
- 14 September 2006: Budget Committee. The main item was GLA expenditure on voter registration.
- 12 October 2006: Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee. The main item was quarter 1 2006/07 budget and performance monitoring information for the GLA Group (focusing on MPA, LFEPA and GLA).
- 19 October 2006: Budget Committee. The main item was the financing of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. A separate scrutiny report was issued in November.
- 9 November 2006: Budget Committee. The main item was Safer Neighbourhoods. A separate scrutiny report is to be issued shortly.

Further information about the Budget Committee meetings can be found at:

<http://www.london.gov.uk/assembly/budgmtgs/index.jsp>

Further information about the Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee meetings can be found at: <http://www.london.gov.uk/assembly/budgetmon/index.jsp>

Appendix 5: Principles of Assembly scrutiny

The powers of the London Assembly include power to investigate and report on decisions and actions of the Mayor, or on matters relating to the principal purposes of the Greater London Authority, and on any other matters that the Assembly considers to be of importance to Londoners. In the conduct of scrutiny and investigation the Assembly abides by a number of principles.

Scrutinies:

- Aim to recommend action to achieve improvements;
- Are conducted with objectivity and independence;
- Examine all aspects of the Mayor's strategies;
- Consult widely, having regard to issues of timeliness and cost;
- Are conducted in a constructive and positive manner; and
- Are conducted with an awareness of the need to spend taxpayers money wisely and well.

More information about scrutiny work of the London Assembly, including published reports, details of committee meetings and contact information, can be found on the London Assembly web page at www.london.gov.uk/assembly

Appendix 6: Orders and translations

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