

REQUEST FOR DIRECTOR DECISION – DD2583

Title: Grow Back Greener – additional funding 2022/23

Executive summary:

This decision requests approval of the allocation of an extra £125,000 to the 2022-23 Grow Back Greener Fund, part of the Inclusive Green Space and Climate Resilience Programme (approved under cover of MD2827). This funding will be allocated from budget approved in the 2022-23 GLA Mayoral Budget under the Green New Deal Mission (under cover of MD2969) for “Climate Adaptation Delivery”.

The funding will support the delivery of additional grant-funded projects that will contribute to improving London’s climate resilience, enhancing green space and reducing flood risk. This will deliver additional impact from the fund and enhance its outcomes.

Decision:

That the Executive Director of Good Growth approves the following:

- expenditure of an extra £125,000 in 2022-23 on the Grow Back Greener Fund, part of the Inclusive Green Space and Climate Resilience Programme
- the related variation of the GLA’s grants management support contract with Groundwork London.

This is in addition to the £1,200,000 allocated to the 2022-23 programme under cover of MD2827, giving a total budget for the programme of £1,325,000.

AUTHORISING DIRECTOR

I have reviewed the request and am satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor’s plans and priorities.

It has my approval.

Name: Philip Graham

Position: Executive Director, Good Growth

Signature:

Date:

20/6/22



PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. Accelerating the delivery of a cleaner, greener London is one of the London Recovery Board's five key outcomes for the capital's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. As part of this, the Green New Deal mission, jointly developed by the GLA and London Councils, is tackling the climate and ecological emergencies and improving air quality by doubling the size of London's green economy to accelerate job creation for all.
- 1.2. The Mayor approved an Inclusive Green Space and Climate Resilience Programme under MD2827 (June 2021). This comprises the second and third round of a community greening and climate adaptation grant programme (the Grow Back Greener Fund 2021-22 and 2022-23), and a Schools Climate Resilience project. The first round of the Grow Back Greener Fund in 2020-21 was approved under MD2665.
- 1.3. The Grow Back Greener Fund makes grants available for local projects that support communities to improve and create green spaces; restore wetlands and waterways; plant trees, install sustainable drainage; create wildlife habitat; and promote access to green space for Londoners.
- 1.4. The 2021-22 round funded 45 projects that are expected to complete in December 2022. These prioritised projects located in areas of poor access to green space and high climate risk, as well as those offering training and skills-development opportunities. The 2021-22 round was split into two themed categories: "access to green space" and "climate change adaptation and water".
- 1.5. The 2022-23 round will again prioritise projects located in areas of poor access to green space and high climate risk, as well as those that offer training and skills-development opportunities. It will also support projects that contribute to delivering the Mayor's ambition for all Londoners to live within a 10-minute walk from a green space.
- 1.6. Under MD2827 the Mayor approved expenditure of £2,025,000 on the Grow Back Greener Fund, comprising £825,000 in 2021-22; and £1,200,000 in 2022-23.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. This DD seeks approval to spend an extra £125,000 on the Grow Back Greener Fund in 2022-23. The previous two rounds of Grow Back Greener in 2020-21 and 2021-22 were heavily oversubscribed, and this year is also expected to be oversubscribed. This extra funding would allow the Mayor to support additional projects that meet the Green New Deal objectives, as well as the selection criteria for the fund.
- 2.2. This would bring the total expenditure on the Grow Back Greener Fund in 2022-23 to £1,325,000, comprising £1,273,000 on grant funding cascaded to recipients and £52,000 on grant management charges. The additional expenditure of £125,000 would be allocated to grant funding (without any increase in grant management charges). This expenditure would be allocated from budget approved in the 2022-23 GLA Mayoral Budget under the Green New Deal Mission (under MD2969) for "climate adaptation delivery". The projects funded would be related to climate adaptation.

- 2.3. As approved by the Mayor, under cover of MD2827, in July 2021 Groundwork London was awarded a contract to provide grant management support services having been procured under an existing GLA Framework agreement (ICT12805-A). The additional grant funding allocated if approved under cover of this DD will be managed through this existing contract.

3. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 3.1. As outlined in MD2827, the Grow Back Greener Fund contributes to the overarching objectives of the Green New Deal Mission, as well as the objectives of the Inclusive Green Space and Climate Resilience Programme to:
- enhance London's vital green infrastructure, make the built environment greener, and help the capital adapt and respond to the climate and ecological emergency by improving biodiversity and air quality; reducing flood and heat risks; and providing shade
 - address the environmental and health inequalities highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic by prioritising interventions in locations with poor access to green space; high vulnerability and exposure to the impacts of climate change; and high flood risk
 - support schools, communities, environmental groups, local authorities, and housing associations to create and enhance green space and take action to build their resilience to climate change
 - create more opportunities for all Londoners, especially those from under-represented communities and children, to develop new green skills and knowledge, and to get outdoors, including by volunteering
- 3.2. This additional funding allocation will specifically provide grant funding to projects that deliver increased resilience to the impacts of climate change, such as reduced surface-water flood risk; improved water quality and water security; decreased urban heat island effect; and increased shade. The projects will also deliver co-benefits such as improved access to green space to support physical and mental health; enhanced biodiversity and ecological resilience; and opportunities for Londoners to volunteer, learn new skills and build community cohesion.
- 3.3. Groundwork London will deliver three training and knowledge sharing sessions for successful applicants, based on assessment of their needs. The Grow Back Greener fund requires successful applicants to submit a mid and end point monitoring report on the project as part of their grant agreements. Learning from the projects will be captured through these monitoring reports and will then be collated and used to inform programme evaluation. Where relevant recommendations to improve future project and programme delivery are identified, these will be disseminated through wider engagement with the sector.

Outputs

- 3.4. The 2022-23 Grow Back Greener Fund will follow an open, transparent call for applications, Applications will be assessed through a two stage-process managed by Groundwork London and the GLA.
- 3.5. This additional funding allocation will enable around two or three more high-quality projects that enhance London's climate resilience to be supported by the fund. The fund will provide grants of between £10,000 and £75,000 for projects such as:

- installing green Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) features to reduce local flood risk and store water for reuse
 - increasing green cover and reducing surface-water flood risk by de-paving to turn grey to green
 - cleaning up, restoring and enhancing water bodies including rivers, canals and ponds
 - tree planting to create shade and promote cooling, improve air quality, managed surface water, and support natural flood management
 - using nature-based solutions such as constructed wetlands to improve water quality
 - increasing water and wastewater awareness.
- 3.6. The grant awards and payments will be made by Groundwork London as part of its provision of the grant's management support services.
- 3.7. The table below sets out the revised budget for the Grow Back Greener Fund, taking into account the additional funding allocated by this DD.

Table 1 – revised budget 2022-23

	Approved under cover of MD2827 (£)	Additional budget to be allocated (£)	Total (£)
Grant funding	1,148,000	125,000	1,273,000
Groundwork London grants management contract	52,000		52,000
2022-23 Total	1,200,000	125,000	1,325,000

4. Equality comments

- 4.1. 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 characteristic¹ 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.

¹ 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.

- 4.2. The Grow Back Greener Fund forms 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.² The Equalities Impact Assessment Report for the London Environment Strategy noted that exposure to poor environmental conditions is much higher among Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) Londoners.
- 4.3. BAME 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, Londoners aged 25 and under, lower-income Londoners, and social renters visit parks less often. National research has found that BAME 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, BAME people are less likely to have access to a garden than White people.³
- 4.4. 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.
- 4.5. The Grow Back Greener Fund grant scheme will improve access to green space among Londoners who currently benefit less from the capital's green infrastructure. It will also help to support climate resilience in locations where there is high exposure and vulnerability to the impacts of climate change. In the previous two rounds in 2020-21 and 2021-22, 70-80% of projects took place in Areas of Deficiency in Access to Public Open Space and 90% in areas of high climate risk.
- 4.6. The Grow Back Greener Fund will support projects that work with local communities, and will prioritise projects that are led by, or work with, Londoners who are less likely to have access to green space, including Black, Asian and minority ethnic Londoners, lower-income Londoners and those aged 65 and over. In the previous two rounds in 2020-21 and 2021-22, 28-35% of projects funded were led by Black, Asian and minority ethnic Londoners and 85-95% of projects were located in areas of deprivation.
- 4.7. Equalities implications will be kept under ongoing review and taken into account as individual project applications are assessed and projects are delivered as part of the Grow Back Greener Fund.

5. Other considerations

- 5.1. The key risks and issues for the Grow Back Greener Fund are:

² [Equalities Impact Assessment Report for the London Environment Strategy](#), 10 August 2017

³ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/environmentalaccounts/articles/oneineightbritishhouseholdshasnogarden/2020-05-14>

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation	RAG rating
Grow Back Greener Fund projects delivered are of a poor quality or are poorly maintained	Low	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administration of the programme, including support to grantees, will be carried out by Groundwork London who have significant experience in managing and supporting GLA community grant delivery. Grant agreements will include clear milestones for payment. Project applications will be required to set out how schemes will be maintained. Project monitoring will include site visits to a proportion of projects to check on delivery. 	GREEN
Grow Back Greener funding awarded to fraudulent grant applications	Low	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due diligence checks carried out before any funding award; Successful applicants must be incorporated organisations and provide financial documentation before receiving payment. An experienced grant-management organisation with appropriate skills and expertise to identify fraud (Groundwork London) will be used. Appropriate framework put in place to monitor project delivery. Mid-term and final grant payments conditional on evidence of delivery and expenditure. 	GREEN

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation	RAG rating
Further Covid-19 lockdown restrictions	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good communication to ensure frank discussions can take place around organisational capacity and delivery. • Guidance on social distancing and other public health measures will be promoted to Grow Back Greener Fund grantees. • In the event of a further lockdown, project delivery reviews will agree new parameters with grantees. • The principles of the Covid-19 funders' statement will be followed to support grantees during exceptional circumstances (endorsed by the GLA) – adapting activities, discussing dates, financial flexibility, listening. 	AMBER

Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

5.2. The Grow Back Greener Fund 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 ensure that over half of London is green by 2050
- 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 Londoner 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.

Conflicts of interest

- 5.3. None of the GLA officers involved in the drafting or clearance of this form are aware that they have any conflicts of interest with the proposed programme.
- 5.4. If any conflicts of interest arise during the delivery of the programme (e.g., a GLA officer has links with an organisation that 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.

6. Financial comments

- 6.1. £125,000 is required to supplement round two of the Grow Back Greener Fund. This fund ensures grant availability for communities within London to improve and create green spaces, reduce areas of high climate risk by installing sustainable drainage systems, and restore wetlands and waterways.
- 6.2. Initially £1,200,000 had been assigned for a second round of the Grow Back Greener Fund (MD2827), however due to the success of its precursor it is anticipated further funding of £125,000 will be required. This addition will allow more projects to be considered for grant funding. If approved, the total value of the Grow Back Greener Fund will increase to £1,325,000.
- 6.3. Due to the volume of applications Groundwork London will continue to provide the Authority with grant management support services under their existing contract – this includes carrying out appropriate due diligence and managing associated risks. No additional fees for this service will apply.
- 6.4. The requested £125,000 will be funded from the Climate Adaptation budget held within the Environment Unit's 2022-23 Budget. All appropriate virements will take place accordingly.

7. Legal comment

- 7.1. The foregoing sections of this report indicate that: the decisions requested of the Director concern the exercise of the GLA's general powers, falling within the GLA's statutory powers to do such things considered to further or which are facilitative of, conducive or incidental to the promotion of economic development and wealth creation in Greater London and in formulating the proposals in respect of which a decision is sought officers have complied with the GLA's related statutory duties to:
 - pay due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people;
 - consider how the proposals will promote the improvement of health of persons, health inequalities between persons and to contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom; and
 - consult with appropriate bodies.
- 7.2. In taking the decisions requested, the Director must have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty - namely the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010 and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations 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 (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). To this end, the Director should have particular regard to section 4 (above) of this report.

- 7.3. If the Director makes the decision sought officers must ensure that the contract with Groundwork is varied in accordance with the provisions set out in that contract before relying upon the increased services.

8. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
GBG fund opens for applications	June 2022
Applications close	September 2022
First-stage scoring and shortlisting panel	October 2022
Second-stage scoring and final panel	November 2022
Funded projects start/finish	Jan 2023 to Dec 2023

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? NO

Part 2 – Sensitive information

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under the FoIA should be included in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form –NO

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Drafting officer to confirm the following (✓)

Drafting officer:

Holly Smith has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Assistant Director/Head of Service:

Catherine Barber has reviewed the documentation and is satisfied for it to be referred to the Sponsoring Director for approval.

✓

Financial and Legal advice:

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

✓

Corporate Investment Board

This decision was agreed by the Corporate Investment Board on 20 June

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES: Signed by Luke Webster on behalf of David Gallie

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

Signature

Date

20/6/22

