

## REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2542

### Title: Retrofit and fire safety

#### Executive summary:

The Mayor is committed to making London net zero by 2030, supporting a green recovery from Covid-19 and ensuring the highest standards of fire safety are met in London's buildings.

Following the Grenfell Tower fire, and the other fires that have since occurred in buildings below 18 metres tall, the Mayor has called for a ban on the use of combustible materials in the external walls of all buildings regardless of height or use. The Mayor believes this comprehensive and prescriptive approach is currently the only way to provide clarity on the rules, remove planning loopholes and achieve higher levels of safety. This approach is adhered to in the planning of new buildings; however, this does not apply to the retrofitting of existing buildings, due to the lack of regulation.

The Mayor's retrofit programmes already integrate considerable fire safety considerations. However, this is not necessarily the case for all retrofit schemes operating in the capital or works being undertaken by local supply chains. It is therefore proposed that the GLA commissions a review of fire safety in relation to retrofit to provide a stronger evidence base and recommendations for future retrofit policy and programme development in London.

This Assistant Director Decision seeks approval for the procurement of an organisation to deliver the evidence base and recommendations on how to further integrate fire safety considerations into current and future retrofit policy and programmes in London.

#### Decision:

That the Assistant Director of Environment and Energy approves: expenditure of up to £35,000 in 2021-22 to procure consultants to: review existing retrofit policies and programmes from a fire safety perspective; evaluate the current materials, market and approach within the sector; and deliver recommendations to further integrate fire safety into current and future retrofit policies and programmes in London.

#### 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:** Catherine Barber

**Position:** Assistant Director  
Environment and Energy

**Signature:**

**Date:**

22/12/21



## **PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE**

### **Decision required – supporting report**

#### **1. Introduction and background**

- 1.1. The Mayor is committed to making London net zero by 2030, supporting a green recovery from Covid-19 and ensuring the highest standards of fire safety are met in London's buildings.
- 1.2. Following the Grenfell Tower fire, and the other fires that have since occurred in buildings below 18 metres tall, the Mayor has called for a ban on the use of combustible materials in the external walls of all buildings regardless of height or use. The Mayor believes this comprehensive and prescriptive approach is currently the only way to provide clarity on the rules, remove loopholes and achieve higher levels of safety. The Mayor's position on combustible materials has been reflected in a range of GLA housing funding and procurement programmes that relate to new builds (including the Affordable Homes Programme (AHP) 2021-2026, the London Development Panel (LDP) 2 and the Mayor's Land Fund). Partners securing funding through the AHP, or delivering homes through the LDP2, are not able to use combustible materials in the external walls of buildings as a contractual condition.
- 1.3. While this approach is adhered to in the planning of new buildings, it does not apply to the retrofitting of existing buildings, due to the lack of regulation. The Mayor's retrofit programmes already integrate considerable fire safety considerations. However, this is not necessarily the case for all retrofit schemes operating in the capital, or works being undertaken by local supply chains.
- 1.4. It is therefore proposed that the GLA commissions a review of fire safety in relation to retrofit, to provide a stronger evidence base and recommendations for future retrofit policy and programme development in London. This Assistant Director Decision seeks approval for the procurement of an organisation to deliver the evidence base and recommendations on how to further integrate fire safety considerations into current and future retrofit policy and programmes in London. For this piece of work to achieve the required objectives, a substantial amount of engagement with the stakeholders and research on available market products and materials will be necessary.

#### **2. Objectives and expected outcomes**

- 2.1. The primary objective of this work is to create a detailed picture of the current state of the retrofit sector in relation to fire safety. This will be complemented by recommendations that will further integrate fire safety into retrofit policy, programmes and practice.
- 2.2. Specific tasks identified as part of the work include:
  - stage one – baseline activity:
    - set out the current regulatory position in relation to retrofit and fire safety and provide a horizon scan for potential future regulation
    - review existing Mayoral retrofit policies and programmes to assess them in relation to fire safety

- market testing to assess products and materials in relation to fire safety and carbon reduction
- literature review to draw together existing activity and best practice on this issue, drawing on national and international examples and research
- stage 2 – provide recommendations on how to further integrate fire safety into current and future retrofit policies and programmes in London.
- stage two – provide recommendations on how to further integrate fire safety into current and future retrofit policies and programmes in London:

### 2.3 The outcomes of the work are intended to:

- review the existing approach to integrating fire safety considerations into retrofit policy and programmes in London
- assess the current state of the sector in addressing these issues
- provide an evidence base for recommendations that will inform current and future work in this area.

## 3. Equality comments

- 3.1. The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the identification and evaluation of the likely potential impacts. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the Equality Act) as public authorities, the Mayor and the GLA must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. Protected characteristics under the Equality Act comprise age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage or civil partnership status.
- 3.2. This work furthers actions and policies set out in the London Environment Strategy (e.g. reducing carbon emissions from homes in London) which has been consulted on publicly, with input sought from all groups and communities. All responses to those consultations were analysed to help ensure the Strategy reflects diverse views and needs.
- 3.3. The intention of this work is to ensure that retrofits are delivered in as safe a way as possible. Some Mayoral programmes are specifically targeted at people who are more likely to be vulnerable as a result of their personal circumstance.

## 4. Other considerations

### Key risks and issues

Risk/issue	Mitigating actions
1. Unable to collect sufficient data to generate a robust baseline	Some data on combustible materials has already been collected by the GLA and will be provided to the appointed contractor

2. Project not completed on time	Scope of the work is focused and should allow a suitably qualified consultant time to deliver Ongoing contract management
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#### Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

- 4.1 The research is intended to support the Mayoral priority in relation to ensuring the fire safety of buildings.
- 4.2 This work is also designed to support delivery of the Mayor's London Environment Strategy and target for London to be zero carbon by 2030. The outputs of this work will provide important evidence to identify the existing baseline of the supply chain and the actions needed to increase this.
- 4.3 Green New Deal and London Recovery work: the Green New Deal Mission has been designed in collaboration with London Councils, taking account of the views of Londoners and stakeholders. The mission has set the challenge of tackling the climate and ecological emergencies and improving air quality by doubling the size of London's green economy by 2030 to accelerate job creation for all. The mission identifies the opportunity to support London's recovery through tackling huge city challenges – such as improving London's homes and workplaces to reduce their energy demand and carbon emissions.

#### Conflicts of Interest

- 4.4 There are no conflicts of interest to note for any of the officers involved in the drafting or clearance of this decision form.

### **5. Financial comments**

- 5.1 Approval is being sought for expenditure up to the sum total of up to £35,000 to procure external consultancy services to develop an evidence base and recommendations in relation to retrofit and fire safety. The funding source for this project will be drawn from the available resources within the 2021-22 Energy Efficiency budgets. The profile for expenditure will be finalised with the consultants but the work is due to be completed this financial year.
- 5.2 The Energy Efficiency team are planning on paying the selected external consultant in arrears, based upon evidence of milestones completed. Expenditure is expected to take place by 31 March 2022.

### **6. Legal comments**

- 6.1 Legal comments are not required given the scale of the procurement exercise being undertaken.

### **7. Planned delivery approach and next steps**

- 7.1. This sets out the proposed timetable

Activity	Timeline
Commencement of procurement	8 November 2021
Contract start date	6 December 2021
Final report submitted to the GLA	11 March 2022
Project closure	11 March 2022

## Appendices and supporting papers:

### 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:

To obtain best value in the procurement process

Until what date: (a date is required if deferring) 30 April 2022

### 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:

Sarah Fletcher 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 13 December 2021

✓

### ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE:

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

**Signature**



**Date**

14/12/21