

## REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2484

### Title: Civic Futures Pilot Project

#### Executive Summary:

Lower-income BAME communities in London are often disproportionately affected by climate change, poor air quality and lack access to green space, and yet, often underrepresented in environmental programmes and groups. The Civic Futures pilot project is a community-led programme designed to explore, at a very local level, effective approaches to tackling environmental inequality linked to social and racial injustices in London. The pilot will work with a lower-income BAME community in Newham, one of the boroughs most affected by Covid-19, in an area identified through GLA data as having high levels of environmental inequality. Co-created and co-governed with the community the project will tackle neighbourhood issues with innovative environmental solutions. The learning from this project will be used to develop approaches to engage underrepresented groups in environmental action that also delivers a range of social benefits.

#### Decision:

That the Assistant Director, Environment approves:

Expenditure of £50,000 towards the Civic Futures pilot project to cover community engagement, administration, external evaluation and the work of project partners Afterparti and Ten Years Time.

#### AUTHORISING ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/HEAD OF UNIT

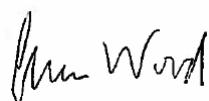
I have reviewed the request and am satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.

It has my approval.

**Name:** Aram Wood

**Position:** Assistant Director,  
Environment

**Signature:**



**Date:**

21 December 2020

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

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

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

- 1.1 Lower-income BAME communities in London are disproportionately affected by environmental factors such as poor air quality and lack of access to green space which lead to longer term health inequalities – a fact starkly highlighted by the current pandemic. Yet these same communities are underrepresented in many environmental programmes and groups, and so their voices are largely unheard. The Civic Futures pilot project aims to identify ways to bridge the gap between those affected, and those represented.
- 1.2 The project team formed as part of the Civic Futures programme with project partners from Afterparti and 10 Years Time both part of the first cohort of civil society groups paired with GLA staff from the Green Infrastructure team. Civic Futures is a collective learning initiative by Dark Matter Labs, Koreo, and The Young Foundation, in partnership with the GLA (ADD 2314). The programme is based on building relationships, through peer networking, work shadowing and discussion, between civil society and teams at the GLA, as part of an ongoing conversation about how to create more equal and effective collaboration.
- 1.3 The Civic Futures pilot project partners identified a common challenge in their work, the underrepresentation of low income BAME communities in environmental activity, and, together, have devised a programme to address it.
- 1.4 The pilot will work at a very local scale. Starting with one community the pilot will identify and co-design environmental interventions which bring social benefits relevant to the community need. The interventions will be determined by the community but could include a community garden, play equipment, bike racks, fitness classes. The pilot will be co-governed with the community, using a range of engagement approaches including identifying champions, working with a community partner and developing a digital platform to build engagement, community capacity and empowerment amongst community members. The pilot will work with an external evaluation partner and GLA research to identify learnings and form a replicable approach.
- 1.5 The project has been funded through GLA team contributions and charity partner Hubbub. Project partners Afterparti and Ten Years' Time bring expertise from civil society and experience of engaging with BAME communities and will be paid for their time in developing and delivering the project pilot. Community engagement events, a community coordinator, incentives for community time and evaluation are built into the budget. Hubbub's match funding will cover three interventions, maintenance plans and publicity work. The project team leads will oversee the pilot and the budget will be managed by GLA staff.
- 1.6 The pilot will be within the borough of Newham. A recent study by CentricLab highlighted the borough of Newham as having the highest BAME population density (per 100k population) overlapped with pollution (SRS scores) and deprivation (IMD decile 2019). This coincides with the Green Infrastructure Focus Map data, which highlights areas in the borough with high income deprivation and high levels of environmental inequality (e.g. poor access to green space, high heat risk, poor air quality). Newham is also one of the boroughs worst hit by COVID-19 with ONS figures showing the east London suffered the highest proportion of deaths from the disease in England and Wales.
- 1.7 This pilot addresses three of the GLA's key Green New Deal objectives:
  - drive a fair and inclusive recovery from COVID-19 that tackles the climate emergency, eradicates air pollution and builds long-term, community-led resilience;

- vulnerability and inequality are reduced by addressing fuel poverty, improving the air we breathe, increasing resilience and providing access to green spaces; and
- green Foundations: empower Londoners and businesses to change behaviours and adopt informed, sustainable choices.

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

### 2.1 Project objectives:

- increase participation in Environmental Programmes by under-represented groups;
- co-create environmental and nature-based solutions to improve health, wellbeing and community cohesion;
- increase learning and green skills;
- promote future advocacy;
- provide a successful, replicable case study; and
- outputs specific to the requirements of the community e.g. outdoor fitness, green space improvement, energy saving scheme, food growing project dependent on community co-design.

### 2.2 Importantly, we aim to create communities that are more pro-actively engaged with environmental issues and with each other. Stronger, more cohesive communities are more resilient and more able to create positive, lasting changes to their environment.

### 2.3 Project leads:

- Ten Years' Time (Civic Futures Participant);
- Afterparti (Civic Futures Participant);
- Hubbub;
- GLA Environment Team (Civic Futures Participant); and
- Community Partner (Newham).

### 2.4 GLA steering group members:

- environment (air quality, climate, green infrastructure, strategy and coordination);
- community engagement;
- community sports team; and
- health.

### *Timescale*

### 2.5 The work of the pilot project will be completed by September 2021. At least three interventions in the community will be funded through the project. The nature of these interventions will be decided by the community. GLA steering group members will meet every month to discuss and input into the project. Project leads will then take the work forward while ensuring ongoing communication with the steering group. The expected final output is a report on the project learning and potential for further work. In addition, short films, a community engagement website and wider publicity for the pilot will be created and promoted.

### 3. Equality comments

- 3.1 This is a project specifically aimed at lower-income BAME groups, who have been adversely affected by COVID-19. Death rates from COVID-19 were higher for Black and Asian ethnic groups when compared to White ethnic groups ([Public Health England report](#), June 2020). By applying the co-creation and co-governance principles to a broader co-benefit programme at a hyper-local level, we are more likely to reflect the genuine voices and motivations of groups that are traditionally less engaged with the environmental agenda.
- 3.2 This project will also be BAME-led, working with 10 Years' Time and Afterparti to develop dynamic and inspiring behaviour-change methods, reinforced with the knowledge and research of the community partner, GLA teams and project partner, Hubbub.

### 4 Other considerations

- 4.1 This project links to the London Environment Strategy, The Mayor's Strategy for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (A Great Place To Live, strategic objective 12) and the Health Inequalities Strategy (objective 3.3 Healthy Places & Healthy Communities). The primary recovery mission focus of this project is the Green New Deal but it is also relevant to A New Deal for Young People and Healthy Food, Healthy Weight.
- 4.2 This programme addresses three of the GLA's key Green New Deal objectives:
- drive a fair and inclusive recovery from COVID-19 that tackles the climate emergency, eradicates air pollution and builds long-term, community-led resilience;
  - vulnerability and inequality are reduced by addressing fuel poverty, improving the air we breathe, increasing resilience and providing access to green spaces; and
  - Green Foundations: empower Londoners and businesses to change behaviours and adopt informed, sustainable choices.

Risk description	Likelihood of the risk occurring	Impact if the risk occurs	Mitigating action
Project under-delivers on environmental programme	Low	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ programme objectives to be written into Project Plan, as an accompanying document to the business plan and MOU</li><li>▪ project scope and objectives discussed early with community partner and coordinator</li><li>▪ co-designed interventions assessed as project progresses and monitored by the steering group to check they are meeting overall project objectives</li></ul>
Project does not attract / engage diverse audiences, especially from 'under represented' groups where the need is greatest, such as lower-	Medium	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ engagement Plan developed to identify audiences most in need and develop effective engagement strategies to reach them</li><li>▪ location carefully selected in area of where the majority of residents are lower-income and BAME</li></ul>

income Londoners and BAME groups			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>community champions and the community coordinator are identified from within target groups</li> </ul>
Project achieves low engagement	Low	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>robust engagement strategies in place</li> <li>early identification of community champions</li> <li>budget allocated to incentivise community time</li> <li>additional funds identified to develop digital engagement platform</li> </ul>
Project overspend	Low	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>costs benchmarked against previous budgets, and line for contingency built in</li> <li>regular review of budget with Manager</li> <li>'live' column to track spend and adjust as necessary</li> </ul>

4.3 There are no conflicts of interest to declare from any of those involved in the drafting or clearance of this Decision Form.

## 5 Financial comments

- 5.1 Approval is being sought for expenditure of up to £50,000 towards the Civic Futures Pilot project, specifically to cover project partner time, community engagement, administration and evaluation.
- 5.2 This project will be funded by several GLA budgets, namely the following:
- £30,000 - Environment Programme budget (Air Quality £10,000; Climate Change £10,000; Green Infrastructure £10,000).
  - £10,000 – Community Sports Team
  - £5,000 – Community Engagement
  - £5,000 – Health Programme
- 5.3 In order to facilitate project and budget management, the budget for this project will be consolidated within the Environment Programme budget for 2020-21 (Green Infrastructure) via budget transfers from the supporting units approved in email from budget holder to business accountant. All appropriate budget adjustments will be made.
- 5.4 It should be noted that the Project partner Hubbub are also contributing £50,000 towards the project but this will remain within their own budgets and administered directly on project interventions and promotion.

## 6 Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Project Planning and Governance, Location Partner and evaluation partner secured	October – December 2020
Community Engagement	January – April 2021
Interventions take place	February – June 2021
Intervention review and maintenance	June – September 2021
Evaluation Report	September 2021

### 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**

If YES, for what reason:

Until what date: (a date is required if deferring)

### 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:

Ruth Knight has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures.

✓

#### Corporate Investment Board

This decision was agreed by the Corporate Investment Board on 21 December 2020.

### ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL SERVICES:

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

**Signature**

**Date**



21 December 2020