

# GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

## REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2525

### Funding for the London Housing Panel from August 2021 until March 2022

#### Executive Summary:

The London Housing Panel was established jointly by the Mayor and Trust for London in April 2019. It exists to provide London voluntary and community-sector organisations with a structured forum to consider housing issues, and to engage with the Mayor, the GLA and other decision-makers. Over the last year, the GLA provided £30,000 of funding to Trust for London (ADD2450) to continue the work of the London Housing Panel. This was match-funded by £30,000 from Trust for London.

This decision seeks approval of a grant of an additional £23,000 to enable Trust for London to continue running the London Housing Panel until the end of March 2022. This will be match-funded by £24,000 from Trust for London. The purpose of the additional funding is to enable the Panel to continue working with the GLA to help inform the implementation of the Mayor's housing agenda, and to contribute to developing a legacy of voluntary and community-sector engagement following the end of the GLA's funding in March 2022.

#### Decision:

That the Assistant Director of Housing and Land approves:

A grant of £23,000 to Trust for London to run the London Housing Panel from 1 August 2021 to 31 March 2022.

#### AUTHORISING ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/HEAD OF UNIT

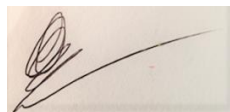
I have reviewed the request and am satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.

It has my approval.

**Name:** Natalie Daniels

**Position:** Assistant Director, Housing and Land

**Signature:**



**Date:**

13 July 2021

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

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

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

- 1.1. The London Housing Panel ('the Panel') was established by the Mayor and Trust for London in April 2019. It was set up to build on the Mayor's existing community engagement work, and to provide a structured forum for the voluntary and community sector to consider housing issues and inform the Mayor's housing policies.
- 1.2. The Panel membership consists of 15 members and a Chair, all of whom are working in the voluntary and community sector. Trust for London coordinates secretariat and project management support for the Panel. To ensure a direct link between the Panel and the Mayor's work on housing, the Chair is also a member of the Mayor's Homes for Londoners Board.
- 1.3. Since its launch in April 2019, the London Housing Panel has held 10 formal meetings, and has set out its policy priorities in a report to the Mayor. These priorities cover three themes: delivering more social housing, improving community engagement, and taking action on temporary accommodation. In the first Panel meeting following the 2021 Mayoral election, the Deputy Mayor for Housing and Residential Development, and GLA officers, outlined the Mayor's housing priorities from his manifesto, and proposed some aligned areas of work for the Panel to contribute to until the end of the new funding term (March 2022). The Panel is currently considering this programme of work with a view to confirming a shared agenda with GLA officers shortly.
- 1.4. The Panel has undertaken work on their priorities through convening a roundtable on temporary accommodation, and inputting to the development of guidance on the equality, diversity and inclusion requirements of the Affordable Homes Programme 2021-26. In addition, members of the Panel have also engaged with the GLA on wider policy development work in relation to planning reform, housing on small sites and the response to Covid-19.

#### Funding to date

- 1.5. The Panel was initially funded for one year (from April 2019 to March 2020) with the GLA providing £30,000 (approved in ADD2339) and Trust for London providing £20,000 to meet the total project cost of £50,000. This funding enabled Trust for London to set up and facilitate the functioning of the Panel, and provided a stipend and expenses for members to ensure that smaller and unwaged community organisations were not prevented from taking part.
- 1.6. In December 2019, a further £10,000 of funding was approved by the GLA (ADD2412) which was match-funded by £10,000 from Trust for London. This funding covered the period from April 2020 to July 2020. The objective of this extension was to enable Trust for London to undertake a review of the Panel's first year in order to inform a decision on its future and longer-term funding following the election, which was originally scheduled for May 2020.
- 1.7. Following this review, and in light of the rescheduling of the Mayoral election to May 2021, £30,000 of funding was approved by the GLA (ADD2450) and was match-funded by £30,000 from Trust for London. This funding enabled the London Housing Panel to continue its work through the extended Mayoral term, covering the period from 1 August 2020 to 31 July 2021.

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

- 2.1. This decision seeks approval for £23,000 to fund the London Housing Panel from 1 August 2021 to 31 March 2022. The total funding needed to cover this period is £47,000, of which Trust for London will provide the remaining £24,000.

- 2.2. The objective of providing this funding is to offer time and resources for the Panel to contribute to key pieces of policy development over a further eight months.
- 2.3. Given the time-limited nature of this funding, the Panel will work with officers to deliver a legacy of community engagement and strengthen the GLA's ability to effectively engage with the network of organisations that support Londoners in their housing needs, and the diversity within London's communities. To this end, the Panel has budgeted for a reflective workshop towards the end of the funding term.
- 2.4. The Panel will meet formally three times between August 2021 and March 2022.

### **3. Equality comments**

- 3.1. Under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, as a public authority, the GLA must have 'due regard' of the need to:
  - eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
  - advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 3.2. The London Housing Panel represents a range of communities across London, including those with protected characteristics who are disproportionately affected by the housing crisis. A key consideration during the recruitment of the Panel was to need to ensure that its membership represented London's diverse communities. This includes: Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups, who are more likely to experience poverty and are disproportionately affected by overcrowding; women (including victims of domestic abuse) who experience homelessness at a disproportionately high rate; and older people, whose needs are often unmet due to a lack of sheltered and/or supported housing. The London Housing Panel provides an opportunity for these communities to engage with the GLA and influence the Mayor's housing policies.

### **4. Other considerations**

#### Key risks and issues

- 4.1. The London Housing Panel was initially established for one year. As such, there is a risk that some members may be unable or unwilling to commit to extending their participation for another year, particularly in light of pressures on the sector due to COVID-19. This could result in the Panel being less representative of London's diverse communities. While the GLA is not aware of any Panel members having expressed a desire to leave the Panel so far, this risk will be mitigated by the continued provision of a stipend for Members.

#### Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

- 4.2. The Mayor is committed to giving Londoners a voice in housing policymaking. The London Housing Panel builds on the existing work undertaken by the Mayor to involve Londoners in developing his housing policies. This includes extensive consultation on the London Housing Strategy and draft London Plan, as well as attendance from City Hall officials at numerous bilateral meetings, workshops and large conferences on housing.
- 4.3. The three areas identified by the London Housing Panel as priorities (delivering more social housing, improving community engagement and taking action on temporary accommodation) align with the Mayor's housing policies and priorities on delivering genuinely affordable homes, creating inclusive neighbourhoods and tackling homelessness.

#### Conflicts of interest

4.4. There are no conflicts of interest to note for any of those involved in the drafting or clearance of the decision.

## 5. Financial comments

5.1. This decision seeks approval for expenditure of £23,000 in 2021-22 to award a grant to Trust for London to deliver the London Housing Panel. Trust for London will be responsible for running the Panel and will provide match-funding of £24,000 to meet the total project cost of £47,000.

5.2. The expenditure will be funded from the Housing and Land Innovation Fund Revenue budget and will be spent in 2021-22 financial year.

## 6. Planned delivery approach and next steps

6.1. The GLA will award £23,000 to Trust for London via a funding agreement, to be provided in accordance with the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code. Trust for London will contribute £24,000 to meet the total project costs of £47,000.

6.2. The funding will allow the Panel to meet formally four times between August 2021 and March 2022, with meetings held in advance of the Homes for Londoners Board when possible. It will also fund three in-depth responses to GLA policy work and three more brief responses.

6.3. Trust for London will be responsible for running the forum, clerking meetings (including the publication of meeting papers and minutes) and managing communications and publicity. The Panel will be governed by Terms of Reference, which were refreshed following a review of the Panel's first year.

6.4. Participation in the Panel may place a strain on resources for very small voluntary and community-sector groups, and unwaged individuals. To ensure forum participation is accessible to all, the stipend that was available for Panel members and the Chair through the previous arrangement will continue. This is intended to cover both meeting attendance and preparation.

6.5. The Panel will be represented at the quarterly meetings of the Homes for Londoners Board, which is chaired by the Mayor. The Chair of the Panel will be a standing member of the board, and may be accompanied by other Panel members as appropriate and with the agreement of the GLA.

| Activity                     | Timeline                                      |
|------------------------------|---|
| Funding agreement in place   | July 2021                                     |
| Homes for Londoners Board    | September 2021<br>December 2021<br>March 2022 |
| London Housing Panel meeting | September 2021<br>December 2021<br>March 2022 |

## 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 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:**

Rohan Ranaweera 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 12 July 2021

**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL SERVICES:**

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

**Signature**

*Anna Gustlett*

**Date**

13 July 2021