

REQUEST FOR DIRECTOR DECISION – DD2617

Title: London Business Hub Roadshow - Cost of Doing Business

Executive Summary:

To commit £134,380 to deliver a London Business Hub (LBH) roadshow. In spring 2023, for three weeks, the LBH will bring public and private sector business support providers together to London's high streets to offer face to face, free advice to micro businesses and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) on how to manage the rising cost of doing business.

Decision:

That the Executive Director of Good Growth approves:

1. Expenditure of £134,379 to deliver the London Business Hub roadshow – Cost of Doing Business.

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 of Good Growth

Signature:



Date:

16/01/2023

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. London is home to over one million micro businesses and small and medium size enterprises (SMEs), which account for 99.8 per cent of London's businesses community and nearly half the capital's jobs. These SMEs contain much of London's future innovation, employment and economic growth.
- 1.2. In the current economic climate, accessing the right advice, guidance and business support is an essential tool to help London's business community. According to the FSB report published in 2021, 84 per cent of small businesses accessed business support advice during the COVID-19 crisis and 45 per cent of them indicated that it helped to survive the pandemic.¹
- 1.3. Since its inception, the London Business Hub (LBH), the Mayor's one stop shop for business support, has been adapting its support offer to the changing economic circumstances.
- 1.4. The LBH will deliver a three-week business support roadshow in at least 15 boroughs across London that will offer free, face to face, advice and guidance to micro businesses and SMEs within their locality. It will be delivered in partnership with private and public sector business support providers, and seek to demonstrate the benefits of accessing business support.
- 1.5. In parallel, the roadshow will promote the services offered by the LBH, in particular the Property Advice Service, Wayfinder and Hub and Spoke.
- 1.6. Taking business support tester sessions to all corners of London will ensure that entrepreneurs from diverse communities actively engage with the LBH. This could be particularly beneficial for the Wayfinder project which is currently being rolled out across three new boroughs in East London.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1. The LBH Roadshow will provide tester business support sessions to SMEs in their local high streets. Participating boroughs will host a minimum of four business support days during a period of 2 weeks.
- 2.2. Venues where sessions will take place will be secured at no cost to the project. Premises could include flexible workspaces, libraries, hotel, restaurants, etc.
- 2.3. Business support sessions could be on lease advice, business rates, marketing, export, growing a business, digitalisation or attracting new customers. Sessions will be individualised for each business and will last 30 to 45 minutes. They will be at no cost to the SME.
- 2.4. Participant businesses will be directed to the LBH to get more in-depth advice and support.
- 2.5. Target groups are micro businesses and SMEs that need support to adapt to the economic challenges or grow into the next stage of development.
- 2.6. The project will be coordinated by one of London's business support agencies which will be appointed via an open procurement process. The appointed supplier will have to demonstrate experience and relevant contacts with London diverse-led business networks.
- 2.7. Other local business support providers, public and private sector, will also participate. The role of the business support agencies will be to provide free business support in their locality and/or in their area of expertise.

¹ [FSB Open for business report](#)

- 2.8. Marketing of the roadshow will be through a combination of local authority outreach to their businesses networks, LBH social media channels and newsletters and communications from participating partners to their own networks and stakeholders.
- 2.9. The project will have three interlinked elements:
- Element 1: To organise face to face business support sessions in a minimum of 15 London local authorities.
 - Element 2: Webinars, Masterclasses and workshop sessions will be hosted in the five London sub-regions.
 - Element 3: The final week will culminate in a LBH show event that will take place in a central London venue, preferably at one of the partners that delivers business support.
- 2.10 The show event will include speed-networking sessions, exhibition of business support partners, inspiring entrepreneur speakers, and workshops, as well as speakers from the Mayor's Office and London Councils.
- 2.11 The event will be open to all London SMEs, and businesses that have attended the one to one sessions will also be invited.

Outputs

- 2.12 The expected outputs of the project are as follows:
- minimum of 15 boroughs participating in the project and marketing the face to face business support among their local businesses
 - minimum of 8 private business support providers participating in the project
 - minimum of 5 London BIDs participating
 - minimum of 350 SMEs participating in the sessions
 - minimum of 30 per cent of participant diverse-led businesses
 - minimum of 5 webinars on different topics of interest to SMEs
 - one celebration event in a central London venue
 - an evaluation report analysing how the SME community views business support benefits.

Outcomes

- 2.13 The outputs that the project aims to deliver are as follows:
- increase by 15 per cent the number of micro and small businesses aware of and using the LBH
 - increase the number of London micro businesses and SMEs aware of the benefits of business support and the LBH offer
 - bringing together for first time private and public sector business support providers to work together under the LBH umbrella.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. The LBH Roadshow will proactively seek to satisfy the GLA's Public Sector Equality Duty, namely through addressing underrepresentation of women, disabled people and businesses run by ethnic entrepreneurs.

- 3.2. The project will actively seek to support businesses founded and led by individuals and management teams from diverse backgrounds. To achieve it, we will use multiple engagement channels like working with diverse entrepreneur business networks, local business support agencies or local chambers of commerce.
- 3.3. The evaluation of the project will analyse how well the project has performed in terms of reaching entrepreneurs from diverse backgrounds. If the collected data demonstrates that there have been gaps in engaging with diverse groups, solutions and actions will be proposed for future engagement events.

4. Other considerations

- 4.1. This project is aligned to the Mayor’s cost of doing business initiative. The final event, that will take place in Spring 2023, could be used as a platform by the Mayor to promote his wider work to support the SME community.
- 4.2. Risks associated with this project

Risk description	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Insufficient businesses attending the tester sessions	Low	High	From inception the project will ensure the number of partners involved in the Roadshow with connections to the SME community is high. They will promote the Roadshow through their networks, which will help to achieve good engagement from diverse businesses attending the support sessions.
Insufficient businesses from diverse backgrounds participating in the sessions	Low	High	We will appoint a provider that has experience and connections with diverse-led business networks. We will also use our existing connections with groups like Federation of Small Business, London Chamber of Commerce, Business Improvement Districts to maximise attendance from diverse-led businesses.
Difficulty accessing free venues for the tester sessions	Low	Medium	The project requires a variety of venues located in high streets. If these could not be accessed, the Enterprise team can approach, at no cost to the project, flexible workspace venues across the capital.

- 4.3. There are no conflicts to note 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 up to the value of £134,380 for the delivery of a London Business Hub Roadshow programme as detailed within this report.
- 5.2. The funding of this programme will be financed by 3 separate LEAP funding sources in 2022-23, namely the following:
 - £13,000 from the LEAP Growth Hub Budget
 - £38,000 from the LEAP Core budget
 - £83,379 from the LEAP COVID Business Support Programme
- 5.3. It should be noted that the Growth Hub and LEAP core budgets are funded by BEIS and have already been paid to the GLA for 2022-23. The LEAP COVID Business Support Programme budget is currently in the Authority's reprofiling reserve awaiting drawdown once spend has been incurred. The overarching Business Support Programme was approved by Mayoral Decision MD2624, and this proposal is a sub-project of this programme.
- 5.4. In terms of spend profile, some expenditure will fall into 2023-24 and as a result the balance of income to finance the spend will be treated as income in advance for 2023-24 in line with the Authority's year-end closing of accounts process. The financing of spend from the reprofiling reserve will be drawn down as required. The project outputs achieved are to be reported to BEIS in 2023, with project closure scheduled by September 2023.
- 5.5. All appropriate budget adjustments will be made.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1. 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
 - 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
 - consult with appropriate bodies.
- 6.2. 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 to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion) and persons who do not (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). To this end, the Director should have particular regard to section 3 (above) of this report.
- 6.3. If the Director makes the decisions sought, officers must ensure that the services and supplies required are procured in liaison with TfL Procurement and in accordance with the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code and contracts are put in place between and executed by the GLA and contractors before commencement of such services and supply.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Procurement of contract	End January 2023
Announcement of successful delivery	Mid-February 2023
Delivery Start Date	Mid-February 2023
Cost of doing business Roadshow	Spring 2023
Analysis of participant businesses	Summer 2023
Evaluation with recommendations	Summer 2023
Project Closure	September 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 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:

Maria Diaz has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Assistant Director/Head of Service:

Alex Conway 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

A summary of this decision was reviewed by the Corporate Investment Board on 16 January 2023.

✓

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES:

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

Signature:

Date:



16/01/2023