



# **LSDC Terms of Reference**

**December 2024**

## LSDC Terms of Reference

The London Sustainable Development Commission (LSDC) was set up to provide independent advice to the Mayor in order for him to fulfil his statutory duty on Sustainable Development.

Sustainable development has been defined in many ways, but the most frequently quoted definition is from Our Common Future, also known as the Brundtland Report: "Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."<sup>1</sup>

Sustainable Development is simply about creating a better quality of life for everyone now and in the future. Sustainability is as much a process as an outcome.

The LSDC works to develop a coherent approach to sustainable development throughout London, not only to improve the quality of life for people living, working and visiting London today and for generations to come but also to reduce London's footprint on the rest of the UK and the world. The LSDC recognises that this requires co-ordinated action to identify key priorities for London and to focus on tackling unsustainable trends, policies and practice. In particular, the Commission will:

- Use its London Sustainable Development work programmes to guide sustainability activity in London, and monitor progress.
- Promote the integration of sustainable development into all strategic decision-making in London, and provide commentary on the sustainable development dimensions of key London-wide strategies, policies and practice to the Mayor, the GLA Group, the Assembly, London bodies and the public.
- Stimulate and encourage research, programmes, or action plans to further the purpose of the Commission.
- Provide an independent London voice on matters that relate to sustainable development, and take responsibility for advocating, encouraging, supporting and promoting best practice on sustainable development to all sectors.

### **Our Mission:**

The LSDC will advise the Mayor to help ensure London reaches the 2030 net zero carbon target in a just and sustainable way. It will support the Mayor in making London a climate resilient city, where people and nature can thrive. It will promote a prospering economy supported with green jobs and skills, while reducing economic, social and environmental inequalities.

The LSDC will do this in a number of ways:

### **Advisory:**

- Identifying challenges and solutions for Sustainable Development in London that exist in 'the space between' traditional GLA policy areas that therefore have no holistic policy approach, whilst highlighting the integrated nature of Sustainable Development;
- Drawing on expert opinion to provide advice to the Mayor and others across London; and
- Producing evidence-based public reports on key environmental, social and economic issues.

### **Monitoring:**

- Analysing and monitoring the latest social, environmental and economic trends based on the latest evidence available. This should include a review of cross-cutting issues identified during the Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process of mayoral strategies, e.g. the London Plan and the London Environment Strategy, and monitoring how these are being tackled.

---

<sup>1</sup> Brundtland, G. (1987). Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future. United Nations General Assembly

### **Capacity-building:**

- Establishing good working relationships with key stakeholders to build understanding and skills for sustainable development; and
- Encouraging, stimulating and sharing good practice between all the London administrations and stakeholders.

### **Advocacy:**

- Encouraging a climate of opinion in which sustainable development can become a reality, promoting wider public debate and shared learning;
- Raising the profile of Sustainable Development issues and solutions both within the GLA family and across London;
- Developing effective partnerships with key networks and organisations to deliver best practice in sustainable development; and
- Influencing and responding to Mayoral policy initiatives.

### **Convening:**

- Act as a convener, bringing together individuals and organisations with different or opposing views, with the intention of finding areas where consensus might be found. Sustainable development often requires the balancing of competing needs in pursuit of the most sustainable course of action. As such, progress towards sustainability can be more complicated in some areas than in others.

### **LSDC Objectives**

The LSDC will promote sustainable development in London through the following objectives:

- Promote a sustainable, thriving economy in London that improves quality of life for all Londoners.
- Meet the diverse needs of all Londoners and communities, promote personal wellbeing, social cohesion and inclusion, and create equal opportunity for all while tackling underlying inequalities.
- Respect the limits of the planet's environment, resources and biodiversity – tackle the causes and impacts of climate change, improve London's environment and ensure that the natural resources needed for life are unimpaired and remain so for future generations.

In order to deliver these objectives, the LSDC will develop and undertake work programmes to be agreed between the LSDC and Mayor's Office, which will respond to the evolving needs of London and Londoners.

### **Core Principles**

In working towards this purpose, the Commission adopts the following core principles:

- To add value to London and complement the work of others
- To work in open and transparent partnerships and embrace a consensual approach
- To seek active engagement and inclusion of citizens, communities, key constituencies and stakeholders.
- To expand and share information, ideas and learning about sustainable development matters
- To commit to equality, diversity and inclusivity.

### **Membership**

The Commission's membership is made up of individuals who have knowledge and expertise in at least one of the areas of sustainable development and fully understand the benefits of an integrated approach to sustainable development as well as **demonstrating a personal commitment to the principles of sustainability**. They represent one or more specific sectors with the ability to contribute fully as individuals to the work of the Commission (not necessarily as representatives of their organisations). Membership aims to reflect the diversity of London's citizens, communities and key constituencies. Commissioners should reside or work in London. The membership is appointed by the Mayor following open advertisement and recruitment. Commissioners are expected to serve four years and will be subject to biennial review. Commissioners are welcome to serve a further term with agreement from both sides if

their work is felt to be particularly valuable to the LSDC. Membership is restricted to a maximum of two terms.

The GLA has committed to the principle that the membership of the LSDC represents the diversity of London.

### **Operation, including relationship to other bodies**

The LSDC fulfils its purpose through the collective commitment and resources of its members, aided by a secretariat. **It has no statutory powers or functions.** The LSDC agrees a two-year business plan setting out priorities and activities to fulfil its purpose within that time.

It meets quarterly to undertake specific activities identified in its programme, to review the implementation of the programme and to identify new and emerging issues relevant to its purpose.

In addition, a number of working sub groups take forward particular priorities of the LSDC programme. The Commission aims to add value to sustainable development activity in London and not duplicate the work of others. In this respect, it will work in partnership with bodies among the business, academic, statutory, voluntary and community sectors.

An Executive group made up of the Chair, Deputy Chair and Chairs of any sub groups or work areas makes the day to day decisions on work priorities, budget spend and personnel issues.

### **The Mayor has a Statutory Duty to:**

- Have regard to the effect of all the GLA does on the achievement of sustainable development in the UK; and
- When preparing or revising strategies, include policies or proposals best calculated to contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development in the UK.

To enable this duty, the GLA has a team of sustainable development professionals who provide advice and support, and try to demystify the various concepts. The team works to ensure that these principles are reflected in the core business of the whole GLA group. The team also support the London Sustainable Development Commission

## **LSDC Commissioner Code 2024**

Currently the LSDC operates within a Commissioner Code. Each Commissioner is provided with a copy of this Code, which specifies both their obligations as a Commissioner and what they can expect from Commission meetings.

This Commissioner Code may need to be reviewed and revised in light of any new LSDC TOR, making clear the roles and responsibilities of Commissioners, focusing on the LSDC key elements of influencing, championing, and delivering sustainable development.

### **Commissioner Code 2024**

#### **A. Commissioners as Ambassadors**

Commissioners are chosen for their profile and expertise in areas of sustainable development as well as their commitment to develop a more sustainable London through an integrated approach. As ambassadors and thought leaders for sustainability, Commissioners represent the diversity of London and embrace a range of principles and values that contribute to a healthy, equitable and sustainable future.

All Commissioners donate their expertise on a voluntary basis and seek to use such input to best effect. Commissioners agree to:

- Uphold the LSDC Terms of Reference and vision, including principles of transparency, equality, diversity and inclusivity;
- Promote sustainability and the LSDC in their day to day work and respective sector/organisation and report back on progress in furthering sustainable development principles in that sector/organisation
- Contribute to and share responsibility for LSDC decisions and activity;
- Prepare for and attend main meetings, sub groups (as appropriate), away days and other events;
- Achieve an acceptable level of attendance at meetings, which will be monitored. Commissioners who absent themselves for 4 consecutive meetings (sub groups and full commission meetings) are deemed to have resigned. If it is necessary for Commissioners to absent themselves for a period of time, they should seek leave of absence from the Chair;
- Notify the secretariat in advance of absence from meetings
- Fully participate in the work of at least one sub group;
- Contribute to published communications about LSDC work at least once a year, including blogs, articles, quotes etc.
- Represent the LSDC as appropriate, including contact with the media (via appropriate protocol);
- Declare any relevant interests;
- Respect confidentiality of information; and
- Ensure effective working relationships with the Secretariat.

#### **B. Commission meetings**

The aim of Commission meetings should be to ensure that not only is business dealt with effectively but also ensure that through the conduct of its meetings, the Commission strives to meet the highest standards of governance, accountability and probity. Therefore, Commissioners will expect meetings to:

- Be efficiently administered;
- Be firmly but fairly chaired, and conducted in a generally relaxed but business-like atmosphere;
- Be enjoyable, with all those present having the opportunity to make a contribution permitting

everyone to contribute in a wide-ranging debate, but side issues curtailed. Commissioners should respect the views of others and their right to speak. However, the Chair (or Lead Commissioner as appropriate) (following a warning) can request that a Commissioner desists if they are using intemperate, provocative or abusive language or if they persist in disrupting the meeting or straying from the agenda;

- Focus on key strategic issues;
- Be properly planned, allowing Commissioners to meet informally afterwards (where appropriate);
- Allow sufficient time to receive a presentation on an item of interest or importance;
- Be held in a comfortable venue free from distraction;
- Be a pleasant occasion and strengthen teamwork between Commission and Secretariat and between Commissioners themselves;
- Be able to effectively deal with agenda business normally in no more than 2.5 hours.

### **C. Chair's action**

The Chair (or lead Commissioner as appropriate) will have responsibility for ensuring the Commissioner Code is followed. There may be occasions when it is judged that a Commissioner should not remain on the Commission through:

- C1. Irregular attendance (Commissioners should not miss more than 4 meetings per year. Commissioners who absent themselves for 4 consecutive meetings are deemed to have resigned);
- C2. Improper behaviour at meetings or events; or
- C3. Failure to declare interests.

When this occurs, the Chair (or lead Commissioner) will take action to ask the Commissioner to resign (seeking advice from the Executive Group and Secretariat).

### **D. Chair's position**

The Chair will be subject to annual review by the Mayor's Office.

The following circumstances will bring into question the Chair continuing in their role:

- Unfavourable annual review; or
- The Chair fails to act in accordance with C1-C3 above; or
- The Chair's direction is at variance with the Commission Business Plan; or
- Validated complaints received concerning the Chair.

In the first instance the Chair will meet with LSDC Executive Group to discuss matters raised and seek resolution prior to the matter being escalated to the Mayor (or the Mayors representative) or to decide any appropriate action.

### **Termination of the Appointment**

- The appointment may be terminated by the Mayor (or the Mayors representative) at any time by giving written notification to the Chair (three months notice).
- The appointment may be terminated by the Chair at any time by giving three months' notice in writing to the Mayor (or the Mayors representative).

### **E. Termination of the Appointment**

- The appointment may be terminated by the Mayor (or the Mayor's representative) at any time by giving written notification to the Deputy Chair (three months' notice).

- The appointment may be terminated by the Deputy Chair at any time by giving three months' notice in writing to the Mayor (or the Mayor's representative).

## **F. Expenses**

The positions of LSDC Chair and Commissioners are not remunerated. Meetings are held in central London and Commissioners are expected to meet their own expenses. However, for Commissioners who may require it, a day rate can be available on a case-by-case basis, for example if their full-time employment is with a charity, NGO or other organisations unable to provide paid time off for Commissioners to attend LSDC meetings and activities, or if they are unemployed, retired or self-employed.

Commissioners can also be reimbursed in accordance with the GLA's Expenses and Benefits Framework, for expenses reasonably incurred in performing their role in connection with the Commission. Expense claims from Commissioners will also be considered by the GLA in exceptional circumstances and for travel expenses outside London by prior arrangement.

In all cases, travel expenses should, where possible, be for the use of public transport only. Exemptions apply, including accessibility and health conditions, and safety.

.....

NAME.....

SIGNATURE.....

DATE.....