

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR MAYORAL DECISION – MD2050

Title: Mayor's Tree Programme 2016/17

Executive Summary:

The Mayor committed in his manifesto to "Embark on a major tree-planting programme across London, in partnership with businesses and the public sector". The current London Plan and mayoral strategies on Air Quality, Climate Change Adaptation and Biodiversity also recognise that increasing tree cover across London will provide a range of services and environmental, social and economic benefits for Londoners.

Enhancing the public realm and greening the capital through further tree planting will improve the usability and the look and feel of the city, contributing towards improving our air quality; improve the city's resilience to a changing climate, making it a more pleasant place for residents and visitors, and an environment in which businesses can thrive.

The Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy held a summit with potential partner organisations involved in tree planting on 11 November at City Hall as a first step to establishing a tree programme to deliver the Mayor's manifesto commitment. The proposed funding for 2016/17 is a precursor to the major tree-programme. It will support a range of tree planting projects including piloting new partnership approaches to delivery. Evaluation from the 2016/17 programme will be used to develop the larger scale tree planting programme for 2017-2020.

Funding of up to £750,000 has been allocated for the financial period 2016/17 to support tree planting across London. Grants will be made available to organisations to support tree planting projects that improve the street scene, London's parks and greenspaces, and promote civic action to improve local neighbourhoods.

Decision:

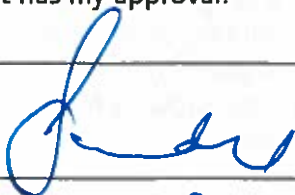
That the Mayor approves a major tree-planting programme for 2016/17 and related expenditure of up to £750,000 on activity to support and which corresponds with delivery of the proposed programme.

Mayor of London

I confirm that I do not have any disclosable pecuniary interests in the proposed decision, and take the decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct for elected Members of the Authority.

The above request has my approval.

Signature:



Date:

22/11/16

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE TO THE MAYOR

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

The Mayor committed in his manifesto to “Embark on a major tree-planting programme across London, in partnership with businesses and the public sector”. The current London Plan and mayoral strategies on Air Quality, Climate Change Adaptation and Biodiversity also recognise that increasing tree cover across London will provide a range of services and environmental, social and economic benefits for Londoners.

It was estimated in 2014 that about 20% of London is covered by trees comprising street trees, garden trees, trees in parks and open spaces, copses and woodlands. There are estimated to be in the region of 8 million trees, of which around 700,000 are street trees. The existing target to increase canopy cover in London to 25% by 2025 was established in 2009 and adopted in the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, and reflected in the London Plan.

Enhancing the public realm and greening the capital through further tree planting will improve the usability and the look and feel of the city, contributing towards improving our air quality; improve the city’s reliance to a changing climate, making it a more pleasant place for residents and visitors, and an environment in which businesses can thrive. Furthermore, additional tree planting contributes to maintaining and improving London’s image as the world’s greenest big city, driving up the capital’s rank in world surveys of liveable cities thereby attracting inward investment creating jobs and growth.

The tree programme 2016/17 will make grants available to organisations to support tree planting projects that improve the street scene and London’s parks and greenspaces, and promote civic action to improve local neighbourhoods.

The need for investment

London is fortunate in having an extensive canopy of trees and network of parks and green spaces. However, population growth is increasing the requirement for additional housing and associated infrastructure which is, in turn, putting extra pressure on existing trees and green spaces and the benefits these provide (as a ‘green infrastructure’) in relation to recreation, health and well-being, ecological resilience and climate change adaptation. Furthermore, due to the significant reductions in public funding available to local government, many local authorities are encouraging local communities and civil society to take more responsibility for improving and caring for the environment at the local level.

Encouraging local communities to plant trees by providing funding to support community action, is a very tangible way of demonstrating the Mayor’s commitment to a collaborative and community-based approach to improving the environment of local neighbourhoods. By making this financial investment the Mayor is providing a strong signal about the importance of this agenda to London. Furthermore, by engaging civil society partners it will also provide local communities access to the skills and expertise they need to deliver projects that are long-lasting and contribute to more strategic objectives. Many of potential civil society partners also already have strong engagement with local and national businesses that can also support tree planting projects.

The GLA investment in the 2016/17 tree programme would support and complement other tree planting undertaken by the GLA and functional bodies including TfL. There would be no continuing financial obligations. Ongoing maintenance would fall to project partners.

The 2016-17 and longer term aims

The proposed 2016–17 tree programme outlined below is intended as a single year programme to provide funding to support tree planting this winter. It is not designed as a programme which in isolation will fulfil the Mayor’s manifesto commitment to “embark on a major tree planting programme”, but as a precursor programme to demonstrate the Mayor’s commitment to support tree planting in London whilst the new tree programme for 2017-2020 is developed. The aim is that several of the projects funded via the programme will pilot new partnership approaches to delivering tree planting projects.

The Deputy Mayor for Environment and GLA officers and are in the process of meeting with and consulting boroughs, businesses and environment sector organisations to develop an ambitious tree programme for 2017-2020. New partnerships on tree planting and green infrastructure are being explored. The 2017-2020 tree programme will encompass a wider range of tree related activity than that outlined below for this winter, and will be linked to the new Environment Strategy for London and other relevant strategies and approaches such as Healthy Streets. The aim is to launch the new tree programme in summer 2017 in advance of next year's tree planting season.

The Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy convened a meeting of tree sector stakeholders on 11 November 2016 at which many organisations outlined how they could work with the GLA to develop a major tree planting programme. Stakeholders also presented a number of options for tree planting and woodland creation projects which could be undertaken or expanded this winter with funding from the GLA.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

Set out below is the proposal for how the 2016/17 investment will be allocated to deliver the outcomes. The proposal is based on the following assumptions:

- A budget of up to £750,000 has been allocated for the period to March 2017.
- The commitment to plant trees includes trees in parks, green spaces and streets and larger scale woodland creation.

Objective – Increasing London's tree cover as a contribution towards the target to increase tree cover by 5% (from 20% to 25%) by 2025 by supporting local communities, businesses and civil society to improve local neighbourhoods through tree-planting and associated activities.

Approach to Grants

In 2016/17 grants will be made available to support tree planting and woodland creation schemes that will help deliver the Mayor's target to increase tree cover by 5 per cent by 2025.

It is proposed that the GLA will issue a call to tree sector partners to submit projects or programmes for funding which are ready to plant this winter. These applications will then be evaluated, before funding agreements are put in place with the successful organisations. Activities will take place from December-March 2017. Grants will be paid in arrears on project completion, by the end of March 2017. Further details of the proposed project timescales are set out in section 7.

Recipients of funding will be required, as part of supported projects/programmes to:

- demonstrate that projects or programmes can start on site this winter, and have a project plan in place
- work with local communities and businesses to plant trees in locations that contribute to enhancing the environmental quality of local neighbourhoods
- involve children and young people in projects where possible
- support local communities and businesses in the long-term management and maintenance of the new planting; and
- support wider environmental aims where appropriate such as improving air quality and reducing surface water flooding (for example by greening routes to school)
- promote the benefits of increasing London's tree cover

Outputs

The number and type of projects that the 'tree programme' will support in 2016/17 is dependent on the number and quality of applications for funding received. Based on previous programmes, it is anticipated that this level of funding could support an estimated 250 to 500 street trees (dependent on cost per tree);

20,000-40,000 whips through mass tree planting events; and 20 to 40 community tree planting projects (depending on grant amount requested) resulting in around 500 trees planted.

We would anticipate that all the projects, with the exception of street trees, would engage volunteers with tree planting, including corporate volunteers. Depending on the number and types of projects supported we would expect to see at least 1000 Londoners directly engaged with the tree programme through tree planting or tree care, including children and young people.

Outcomes

The investment in trees will improve London's street scene, wider public realm and green spaces, creating cleaner, greener and more pleasant spaces for Londoners and visitors to enjoy. This investment programme aims to:

- contribute towards increasing the tree canopy cover across London by 5% by 2025;
- support wider environmental aims including improving air quality, providing shade and urban cooling, and helping the city adapt to a changing climate;
- engage businesses and communities in tree planting;
- ensure trees and woodlands contribute to a high quality environment;
- help foster community and individual well-being and social inclusion through contact with trees and woodlands;
- make sure the right trees are in the right place;
- support healthy living by providing a more pleasant living environment;
- help the city adapt to the impacts of climate change;
- result in more Londoners understanding and appreciating the benefits of trees and take action locally to protect, manage and plant trees and woodlands.

Determining the success of projects

The investment will be successful if it is able to clearly demonstrate that it has resulted in:

- trees being planted in new locations and in places where local communities want them by the end of March 2017
- tree-planting is undertaken with, and by, local communities including local residents, local community groups and local businesses; and
- funding enables additional trees to be planted in London during 2016-17 and leverages additional resources through sponsorship, in-kind support (e.g. donation of materials or provision of skills and expertise on a pro-bono basis) and volunteering.

Monitoring and reporting

Existing monitoring and reporting mechanisms will be modified and utilised for this new programme.

In all cases in order to ensure that the programme is delivered according to the GLA standards and requirements, payments will be made upon completion of each project or programme and as set out in the terms and conditions of the grant. Funding agreements will agree milestones for project delivery with recipients of funding.

3. Equality comments

Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities are enshrined within the GLA's programmes and activities according to the Mayor's Framework for Equal Life Chances (June 2014). The framework aims to bring Londoners together rather than dividing them. It promotes outcomes for a diverse range of communities that seek to bring real changes to the quality of life for all Londoners. Projects stem from the current suite of Environment strategies which was informed by a full Integrated Impact Assessment, which includes a consideration of equalities.

Projects delivered through the Tree Programme 2016/17 will aim to engage as many Londoners as possible to help to meet the needs of people sharing protected characteristics under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. Delivery partners will aim to deliver projects in deprived wards; engaging people with disabilities;

engaging those over 60 and under the ages of 16; engaging with different population groups including those with protected characteristics.

Grant application processes will require a statement about the organisations' approach to equality and/or the submission of organisations' equality policies.

Recipients of funding will be required to outline how projects will provide environmental and community benefit. This includes information on the intended beneficiaries (including relevant details such as ages, geographic area of residence, ethnicity). They will be required to advertise their volunteering opportunities via Team London where appropriate.

4. Other considerations

a) Links to strategies and Mayoral and corporate priorities

This investment links to a number of Mayoral commitments and strategies including:

- taking forward the All London Green Grid and the aims expressed in the ALGG Supplementary Planning Guidance;
- increasing tree planting in and adjacent to streets helping to reduce exposure to particulates as identified in the Air Quality Strategy;
- increasing green cover helping to ameliorate the urban heat-island effect and reduce storm-water run-off – as identified in the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy; and
- encouraging more use of green space encouraging active lifestyles by contributing to initiatives to combat childhood obesity – as identified in the Health Inequalities Strategy.

The investment links to the Mayor's London Plan policies on:

- Green Infrastructure - The Mayor will pursue the delivery of green infrastructure by working in partnership with all relevant bodies... to apply the principles of the All London Green Grid.
- Public Realm - London's public spaces should be secure, accessible, inclusive, connected, easy to understand and maintain, relate to local context, and incorporate the highest quality design, landscaping, planting, street furniture and surfaces.
- Urban Greening - The Mayor will promote and support urban greening, such as new planting in the public realm to contribute to the adaptation to, and reduction of, the effects of climate change.
- Parks and green space - The Mayor supports the creation of new open space in London to ensure satisfactory levels of local provision to address areas of deficiency.
- Trees & Woodlands - Trees and woodlands should be protected, maintained, and enhanced, following the guidance of the London Tree and Woodland Framework (or any successor strategy).

b) Impact assessments and Consultation

No specific consultation or impact assessment has been undertaken. The objectives and outcomes of the project are derived from mayoral strategies which have been subject to extensive consultation and impact assessment.

Key stakeholders are largely the stakeholders and stakeholder groups engaged through previous tree planting initiatives and through the London Trees and Woodlands Partnership. Boroughs and tree sector stakeholders have been consulted about planting this winter at the meeting on 11 November, as well as via individual meetings and regular updates.

Communications will be undertaken to ensure projects are promoted.

- c) **Risk**
The GLA will manage the overall operational aspects of the programmes, using its standard corporate approach to project management.

The risks associated with these projects are very similar to those faced by the previous parks and trees programmes funded by the previous administration.

Assumptions have been made about the ability and willingness of borough and third sector partners to submit proposals for projects and programmes that will help deliver the Mayor's commitments and objectives. The experience of predecessor initiatives, and the ongoing partnership work with partners and stakeholders, including the recent meeting of the Deputy Mayor for Environment with stakeholders on 11 November, suggests that this is a reasonable assumption.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Overspend	Low	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding offers will be subject of funding agreements with clear and specific budgets agreed and payments will be made on achievement of milestones
Underspend	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussions with key stakeholders capable of delivering projects already underway
Insufficient projects identified	Low	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing dialogue with partners and monitoring of applications to determine constraints
Lack of physical capacity for trees	Low	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing dialogue with partners to determine constraints and identify suitable sites
Public and partner buy-in	Low	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Previous tree planting projects were well received The All London Green Grid has been consulted upon and endorsed by all major delivery partners
Public understanding of reason for spend	Medium	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There will be an overarching 'narrative' for the programme with messages resonant with Londoners

5. Financial comments

- 5.1 Approval is being sought to approve the funding of up to £750,000 to support a tree planting programme across London.
- 5.2 As this programme of works involves funding agreements, officers are reminded to ensure that they liaise with both the Legal and Finance Teams in the preparation and execution of the agreements. In addition the award and monitoring of the funding and associated payments should be in line with the Authority's Funding Agreement Toolkit.
- 5.3 The proposed expenditure will be funded from proposed revenue carry forwards from 2015/16 which are no longer required.
- 5.4 Any changes to this proposal, including budgetary implications will be subject to further approval via the Authority's decision-making process. All appropriate budget adjustments will be made.

6. Legal comments

6.1 The foregoing sections of this report indicate that:

6.1.1 the decisions requested of the Mayor fall within the statutory powers, acting on behalf of the GLA, to do anything which is facilitative of or conducive or incidental to the promotion of economic development and wealth creation in Greater London; and

6.1.2 in formulating the proposals in respect of which a decision is sought officers have complied with the GLA's related statutory duties to:

- (a) pay due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people;
- (b) 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; and
- (c) consult with appropriate bodies.

6.2 In taking the decisions requested, the mayor 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 between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment) and persons who do not share it and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it (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 Officers must ensure, to the extent that:

- grant funding is to be awarded as a contribution to costs of third party projects with objectives which correspond with those of the GLA, such funding is disbursed in a fair and transparent manner in accordance with the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code and a funding agreement is put in place between and executed by the GLA and proposed recipient(s) before any commitment to fund is made; and
- any services, works or supplies are required for the delivery of the programme proposed, are procured by Transport for London Procurement who will determine the detail of the procurement strategy to be adopted in accordance with the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code. Officers must ensure that appropriate contract documentation is put in place and executed by the successful bidder(s) and the GLA before the commencement of the services.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

The planned approach is to announce the tree programme and issue a call for applications for funding in late November. These applications will be assessed in December, and funding agreements put in place with successful organisations. Project delivery will commence once funding agreements are signed. Tree planting projects will be completed by the end of March 2017, and grant funding claimed. Project monitoring information will then be collated and evaluated. Evaluation from the 2016/17 programme will be used to inform and develop the larger scale tree planting programme for 2017-2020.

Activity	Timeline
Announcement	w/c 28 November 2016
Funding Application process	November-December 2016
Grants Awarded and Delivery Start Date	December 2016-January 2017
Delivery End Date for Tree Planting	End of March 2017
Final evaluation start and finish (self)	April-May 2017
Project Closure	June 2017

Appendices and supporting papers: None.

Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI Act) 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 approval 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 Confidentiality: Only the facts or advice considered to be exempt from disclosure under the FOI Act should be 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:

Andrew Jones has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following: ✓

Sponsoring Director:

Fiona Fletcher Smith has reviewed the request and is satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities. ✓

Mayoral Adviser:

Shirley Rodrigues has been consulted about the proposal and agrees the recommendations. ✓

Advice:

The Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal. ✓

Corporate Investment Board

This decision was agreed by the Corporate Investment Board on the 21st November 2016

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES:

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

Signature *M. D. Belle*

Date *21.11.16*

CHIEF OF STAFF:

I am satisfied that this is an appropriate request to be submitted to the Mayor

Signature

D. Bellamy

Date *21/11/2016*

