



LONDON FIRE BRIGADE

Report title

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## GLA Group Corporate Governance Framework Agreement Update

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Report to Date

**Commissioner's Board**      6 April 2022 **London Fire Commissioner**

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Report classification:

**For Decision**

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The subject matter of this report deals with the following LFB strategic priorities:

**Delivering excellence**

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Report number – [LFC-0000] – COMPLETED BY GOVERNANCE TEAM

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For Publication

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**PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE TO THE DECISION-MAKER**

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I agree the recommended decision below.

**Andy Roe**  
London Fire Commissioner

Date

## Executive Summary

As part of its governance arrangements, the Greater London Authority (GLA) and its functional bodies (collectively known as the GLA Group) are signatories to a GLA Group Framework Agreement (the Agreement). The Agreement is an overarching commitment in relation to the culture and individual behaviours of the GLA Group and contains specific corporate governance commitments and GLA commitments.

The Agreement has recently been updated. Each functional body is asked to sign up to the revised Agreement, following its approval by the Mayor.

### Recommended decision(s)

That the London Fire Commissioner signs up to the Greater London Authority Group Corporate Governance Framework Agreement, as set out in Appendix 1 to this report.

## 1. Introduction and background

1.1 Governance is about how an organisation ensures that it is doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people, in a timely, inclusive, open and accountable manner. It comprises the systems and processes, and cultures and values, by which it directs and controls and through which it accounts to, engages with its stakeholders.

1.2 The LFC has a range of key governance documents. These include:

(a) The GLA Act 1999 (as amended) which established the GLA and subsequent legislation, including the Policing and Crime Act 2017, which impacts on LFC's remit and responsibilities;

(b) The LFC Scheme of Governance, which set out its decision-making processes and scheme of delegation; and

(c) The GLA Group Framework Agreement, which is the subject of this report.

1.3 The LFC validates its governance arrangements by preparing an Annual Governance Statement for submission to the external auditor upon the closure of its accounts. The Statement is reviewed by the Audit Committee and included as part of the Annual Report and Statement of Accounts that are subject to annual approval by the LFC.

### GLA Group Framework Agreement

1.4 In 2009, following a review of the GLA's Corporate Governance, the Mayor and the GLA's functional bodies signed up to a GLA Group Framework Agreement.

- 1.5 The Agreement is a voluntary but firm commitment by all parties to be open, transparent and accountable for their actions and behaviour. It is also a commitment to hold to specific Mayoral and London Assembly expectations for the Group to interact in a way that enhances accountability and service provision to Londoners. It is a high-level document that sets common principles that apply across the Group, with the methods of implementation left to each Functional Body to determine. The Agreement was reviewed last in 2016.
- 1.6 The Agreement is to be reviewed by the GLA, TfL, MOPAC, LFC, LLDC and OPDC. Minor amendments have been incorporated to ensure the agreement is up to date. The updated Agreement is in Appendix 1. Appendix 2 shows the changes made in this new version.
- 1.7 The LFC has been asked to approve its participation through its own formal governance mechanisms, and to confirm in writing to the GLA's Monitoring Officer when this is done.
- 1.8 The main change to highlight within the Agreement is the removal of the prescribed threshold for the declaration of gifts and hospitality. It should be noted that the GLA has set its threshold to £50. As part of the review, General Counsel will exercise delegated authority to increase the threshold to £50.
- 1.9 The LFC has in place protocols and processes that address all the requirements of the revised Agreement.

## **2. Equality comments**

- 2.1 The LFC and the Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience are required to have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) when taking decisions. This in broad terms involves understanding the potential impact of policy and decisions on different people, taking this into account and then evidencing how decisions were reached.
- 2.2 It is important to note that consideration of the Public Sector Equality Duty is not a one-off task. The duty must be fulfilled before taking a decision, at the time of taking a decision, and after the decision has been taken.
- 2.3 The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership (but only in respect of the requirements to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination), race (ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality), religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex, and sexual orientation.
- 2.4 The Public Sector Equality Duty requires decision-takers in the exercise of all their functions, to have due regard to the need to:
  - eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct
  - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
  - foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 2.5 Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic where those disadvantages are connected to that characteristic
- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it
- encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2.6 The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.

2.7 Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- tackle prejudice
- promote understanding.

#### **4. Other Considerations**

##### *Workforce comments*

4.1 None contained within this report.

##### *Sustainability comments*

4.2 None contained within this report.

##### *Procurement comments*

4.3 None contained within this report.

#### **5. Financial comments**

**5.1** The Chief Finance Officer has reviewed this report and has no comments.

#### **6. Legal comments**

6.1 Under section 9 of the Policing and Crime Act 2017, the London Fire Commissioner (the "Commissioner") is established as a corporation sole with the Mayor appointing the occupant of that office. Under section 327D of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 (GLA Act 1999), as amended by the Policing and Crime Act 2017, the Mayor may issue to the Commissioner specific or general directions as to the manner in which the holder of that office is to exercise his or her functions.

6.2 By direction dated 1 April 2018, The London Fire Commissioner Governance Direction 2018, the Mayor has directed that, "The functions of the Commissioner shall be exercised by the office holder to fulfil the commitments given by [the Commissioner] as a signatory to the GLA Group Corporate Governance Framework Agreement."

## List of Appendices

Appendix	Title	Open or confidential
1.	Revised GLA Group Corporate Governance Framework Agreement	Open
2.	Track change version of 2016 GLA Group Corporate Governance Framework Agreement	Open

**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 nonpublication.

**Is there a part 2 form – NO**

### ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Drafting officer to confirm the following (✓)

#### Drafting officer

Andrew Beesley, Head of Governance has drafted this report and confirms the following:

#### Assistant Director/Head of Service

Kathryn Robinson, General Counsel has reviewed the documentation and is satisfied for it to be referred to Board for consideration.

#### Advice

The Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal;

Tom Davies Legal Advisor, on behalf of General Counsel (Head of Law and Monitoring Officer)

David O’Sullivan Financial Advisor, on behalf of the Chief Finance Officer

# GLA Group Corporate Governance Framework Agreement

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Date of approval and issue	Approved by GLA and each Group body within scope - March 2022
Changes from Previous version	Minor amendments to previous version dated May 2018
Review date	December 2024
Senior owner	Monitoring Officer
Document Owner	Monitoring Officer & Governance and Performance Manager

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# GLA Group Corporate Governance Framework Agreement

## Preamble

This Agreement is made between the Greater London Authority (GLA) and its functional bodies, the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC), the Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation (OPDC), Transport for London (TfL), the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and the London Fire Commissioner (LFC) – collectively known as the GLA Group.

It is a voluntary and firm commitment by the GLA's elected members, the Mayor's appointees, members of functional body boards, and officers, to be open, transparent and accountable for their actions and behaviour. It is also a commitment to hold to specific Mayoral and London Assembly expectations, set out below, and for the Group to interact in a way that enhances accountability and service delivery to Londoners.

This Agreement does not cover other organisations to which the GLA provides general grant funding (i.e. funding for core costs rather than just specific projects). These organisations are not functional bodies and not formally part of the GLA Group. However, the GLA sets out separate governance requirements in relation to each body within grant agreements where applicable.

## Part A: Overarching commitment

Each organisation will ensure that it promotes a culture and individual behaviours that:

- demonstrates and supports the Principles of Public Life (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, leadership).
- enhances openness, transparency and accountability.
- strengthens coordination across the GLA Group.
- ensures effective and efficient service delivery to Londoners.

## Part B: Specific corporate governance commitments

Each organisation within the GLA Group will ensure that:

### *Decision-making*

1. It has clear and codified decision making and reporting procedures, which include an explanation of how the organisation consults the Mayor on relevant decisions.
2. Decisions taken by the board and/or senior officers acting under delegated authority are recorded and published (while not all parts of the GLA Group are

subject to The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, each body should have an open and transparent approach, going beyond the basic statutory requirements)<sup>1</sup>.

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#### *Openness and transparency*

3. It meets the requirements embodied in the Local Government Transparency Code and seeks to go beyond them.
4. It has a codified openness and transparency policy similar in scope and approach to the GLA's *Openness and Transparency at the GLA* commitment<sup>2</sup> and based on the principle that all information should be accessible unless a relevant exemption applies or publication would be prohibitively costly.
5. Relevant papers should be provided at least five clear working days before committee meetings.
6. Establishes and maintains a transparency landing page on its website, through which regularly updated transparency information can be accessed, and ensures all documents falling within the terms of this Agreement are freely available and easy to find.
7. Publishes transparency data on the London Datastore.
8. Includes in its annual report information on how it has maintained and promoted transparency in the previous year.

#### *Roles and responsibilities*

9. Members and senior managers clearly understand the role and functions of other parts of the GLA Group and the proper process for interacting with the Mayor's Office.
10. A clear and robust process exists to handle any concerns arising regarding the conduct of the GLA officers appointed directly by the Mayor (the "11 plus 2").
11. Where the Mayor, Assembly Members, functional body members or officers have multiple roles within the organisation or across the GLA Group, they properly discharge their functions and avoid and manage conflicts of interests.

#### *Codes of conduct*

12. It has a code of conduct setting out the requirements for and governing the activities of its elected members and/or board members acting in their capacity as such.

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<sup>1</sup> For the GLA, 'Decisions taken by the board and/or senior officers' includes decisions taken by the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and London Assembly members. For MOPAC, it includes the Mayor and Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/governance-and-spending/sharing-our-information/openness-andtransparency>



13. It has a code of conduct setting out the requirements for and governing the activities of its staff.
14. It has clear, codified and robust systems to manage alleged breaches of either code.

#### *Registration and declaration of interests, gifts and hospitality*

15. It has a regime in place to register and declare interests and gifts and hospitality received by elected members, board members, independent persons, co-opted members, officers appointed by the Mayor and senior officers that is similar in scope and approach to the GLA's policy.
16. It makes use of the GLA Group template<sup>3</sup> to register any interests, to aid consistency and transparency.

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17. Registers are available to other Group bodies and the public via the organisations' websites. Gifts and hospitality are reported to the relevant audit body on a regular basis and in collated form.  
[NOTE: This section (15 – 17) will also be applied to those bodies directly established by mayoral decision where the members of that body are appointed by the Mayor.]

#### *Standards*

18. It sets out and communicates widely details of the role of its Monitoring Officer (where it has one) and/or other statutory and senior officer responsible for corporate governance, as well as the systems in place to deal with Standards-related issues.
19. It will develop and maintain procedures to allow anyone to make complaints in relation to probity and conduct issues for office-holders, similar in scope and approach to the GLA's policy.

#### *The London Assembly*

20. It has a demonstrably proactive and positive approach to engaging with the London Assembly, including a proper allocation of resources to deal with Assembly queries from the London Assembly and its Members.
21. It has codified systems, made freely available, to deliver responses to priority matters (it will normally provide information requested by the Assembly and only in exceptional circumstances require it to use its statutory powers to request information).
22. A senior-level review is undertaken during each Mayoral term to assess and report on the body's approach to engaging with the London Assembly and meeting points 20 and 21 above.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/governance-and-spending/good-governance/register-interests>

### *Correspondence and questions*

23. It has in place an effective and codified process for handling correspondence from the public, press and elected politicians.
24. Information requests from committees and Assembly Members should be fulfilled within 20 working days.
25. Answers to Mayoral Questions should always be made public, not sent to Assembly Members confidentially.

### *Application and consistency across the Group*

26. It has a specific senior post(s) with responsibility for ensuring compliance with the requirements of this agreement and maintaining and regularly reviewing related policies and procedures.
27. The codes, documents and procedures referenced in and flowing from this agreement are developed, maintained and revised in liaison with the GLA's Monitoring Officer to ensure consistency across the Group.
28. Its responsible officer will meet regularly with the other relevant officers from across the Group to promote consistency.
29. All policies and procedures falling within the terms of this Agreement are used as an integral part of the induction process for elected members, board members, independent members and officers, and that regular training on these areas is provided over time.

### *Mayoral Directions*

30. Whilst there may be discussion and a divergence of opinion on some issues, once a statutory Direction (including any standing Governance Direction) has been issued the officers of each organisation subject to that Direction will engage with the GLA in a positive manner to fulfil the Direction's requirements promptly and in full, whilst still meeting their obligations to their own organisation.

## **PART C: GLA commitments**

### **In addition, the GLA will ensure that:**

1. A code of practice to govern the process for Mayoral appointments (the 13 positions under section 67(1) of the GLA Act 1999) and the Mayor's appointments to functional body boards is generally available.
2. Information on the lines of accountability for Mayoral appointments (including those that relate to the functional bodies and whether or not they are appointed under s67(1)(a) or (b) of the GLA Act) are freely and publicly available.
3. The roles and responsibilities of officers appointed by the Mayor, including their objectives and areas where there are particular constraints, are contained in relevant written documents and made freely and publicly available as soon as is practicable following the appointment.
4. The detailed terms of any appointment by the Mayor of any elected GLA member, including objectives and any areas where there are particular constraints, are contained in relevant written documents and made freely and publicly available as soon as is practicable following the appointment.
5. The detailed terms of any appointment by the Mayor and London Assembly of the GLA's statutory officers, including specific objectives and general responsibilities, are contained in relevant written documents and made freely and publicly available.
6. The scheme of delegation of Mayoral functions set out in the 'Mayoral Decision Making in the GLA' document is regularly reviewed, updated as necessary and published on the GLA's website.
7. The detail of each decision taken by the Mayor through the GLA's decision-making process is made freely and publicly available shortly following the Mayor's decision, except in cases where an exemption applies or deferral of its publication is justified.
8. The detail of each decision taken by the Mayor to provide a statutory Direction or guidance to the relevant functional bodies and/or other relevant agencies is, once issued, made freely and publicly available.
9. There is a GLA Group-wide review of this document during each Mayoral term, led by the GLA's Monitoring Officer.
10. The GLA's governance documents are available publicly and collectively on the GLA's website<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/governance-and-spending/good-governance/our-procedures-0>

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## Part D: Approval

Each body in scope is required to approve their participation through their own formal governance mechanisms, and to confirm in writing to the GLA's Monitoring Officer when this is done.

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Responsible officer (name &amp; position)</b>	<b>Date confirmed</b>
GLA	Mary Harpley, Chief Officer	
London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC)	Lyn Garner, Chief Executive	
Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation (OPDC)	David Lunts, Chief Executive	
Transport for London (TfL),	Andy Byford, Commissioner	
Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)	Diana Luchford, Chief Executive	

London Fire Commissioner (LFC)	Andrew Roe, Commissioner	
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