CABINET MEMBER DELEGATED DECISION REPORT 4 OCTOBER 2021

Report title: Digital Lambeth Programme Project Capital Budget Allocation

Wards: All

Portfolio: Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance: Councillor Andy Wilson

Report Authorised by: Fiona McDermott: Strategic Director for Finance and Investment

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REPORT SUMMARY

This report seeks approval to drawdown £500,000 to support the delivery of the Digital Lambeth Strategic Programme approved by Cabinet in March 2021 through the projects set out in this report focusing on creating economic advantage and innovating public services. .

FINANCE SUMMARY

The projects being delivered under the Digital Lambeth Strategic programme are estimated to cost £500,000 and will be delivered within the £17m Capital allocation approved by Cabinet on 15 March 2021.

RECOMMENDATIONS
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1.   To approve a programme of works and projects as summarised in section 2

2.   To approve the allocation of £500,000 from the approved capital budget

1. CONTEXT

1.1 Our digital vision is to have a Lambeth that is vibrant, connected, inclusive place for people and business to thrive, where everyone has access to excellent services enabled by modern technology and modern ways of working.

1.2 Digital technology as a vehicle to transform the lives of residents, support businesses, help local economic growth and contribute towards reducing our carbon footprint. These aims are evident within the planned outcomes of the Digital Strategy.

1.3 On 15 March 2021 Cabinet approved the Lambeth Digital Strategy including the Digital Lambeth Strategic Programme, allocating £17m from the Capital Investment Programme and provided delegated authority to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance to approve individual schemes within the Digital Lambeth Strategic Programme.

1.4 The Digital Lambeth Strategic Programme was formed to deliver the Digital Strategy and will embrace the principles of private enterprise, income generation and grants. The capital bid supporting the programme contains all projects eligible for capital funding and the estimated costs to deliver the Digital Strategy and meet our digital vision. It is anticipated that as the programme progresses there may be opportunities to attract private investment (financial and non-financial), grants, and many of the projects will enable us to generate income. This has not been quantified and is not contained within the current medium term financial planning.

1.5 All decisions put forward for approval on 15 March 2021 Cabinet were agreed and schemes and projects for approval under the programme will now being put forward for approval by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance.

2. PROPOSAL AND REASONS

2.1 The schemes stated below are proposed under the Digital Lambeth programme to aid in the delivery of outcomes from the Digital Strategy.

2.2 This phase of delivery is focused on the Digital Lambeth Strategy objectives of "Creating Economic Advantage" and "Innovating Public Services"

2.3 Creating economic advantage is focused on a digitally skilled workforce for a thriving, modern economy, creating high value jobs. This area of the Digital Strategy will aid in the support of business growth and economic prosperity. Examples include:

- Opportunity Lambeth

- Digital Planning

2.4 Innovating Public Services is focused on improving service offerings and better customer experience to service users and enabling more services to accessible online and through self-service. Examples include:

- Schools Digitisation

Opportunity Lambeth

2.5   Skills and employment, access to good jobs, fair pay and resilience are key to achieving the ambitions we have set in the Borough Plan, our Economic Resilience Strategy and our Skills and Employment Strategy. We have analysed labour market data and trends and tested this alongside local insight and intelligence about the impact of Covid-19 on the economy and jobs. We have also listened to feedback from our key stakeholders and residents, which has led us to identify three key challenges. We need to:
   - Overcome the long-term skills and employment inequalities faced by many of our residents
   - Tackle the current and lasting impact of Covid-19 on livelihoods
   - Ensure our skills system is responsive to the rapidly changing needs of the economy and residents now and in the future.

This can only be done through working in partnership with our strong foundation of talented communities, committed employers and the existing capacity within our skills and employment system to deliver quality learning, support and jobs to residents.

2.6   Skills and Employment intend to develop and implement a market leading platform digital platform enabling Lambeth anchor employers and their supply chains to connect Lambeth residents with jobs and employment support. The platform will provide the capacity for local organisations to capture and share their data on jobs, internships, and apprenticeships, peer to peer mentoring, workshops, master classes and networking whilst enabling Lambeth residents and the organisations helping them to access a wide range of place-based opportunities. It will help Lambeth residents require to understand their skills and connects them to opportunities from local employers - while providing a low-cost local talent pool for businesses.

2.7   The project will review the existing mini -site and resource significant development of 'Opportunity Lambeth' to broaden its reach and increase its effectiveness in providing a 'Single Front Door' for Skills and Employment provision in Lambeth. The project has clear targets with regards to increasing work experience, apprenticeship, and 'good' employment opportunities available to residents. It will also support our ambition to Create a Knowledge Hub for the Skills and Employment Board (SEB) to gather and share insights from providers, employers, residents, and wider sources, including specific evidence on:

   a   what works in terms of supporting our most marginalised communities such as Black residents

   b   the detailed skills requirements, jobs and career pathways in key growth sectors including the green economy, creative and digital industries, and health and social care.

2.8   The Capital budget will resource the procurement and development of the platform ensuring it has the functions required to provide a truly joint up approach between employers, applicants, and training providers in Lambeth. Ongoing costs relating to maintenance of the platform will be met through the S106 budget. Project Management expertise will be sourced from the existing Skills and Employment team.

Digital Planning Engagement

2.9 The Digital Place Based Engagement project is one of three high profile projects which the Government has cited as part of their vision relating to the recent White Paper for digital planning services. The project is being led by Camden Council. Lambeth has an ambition to be a project partner – and to do so requires a commitment of a resource, dedicated to work as a partner investigating, testing and developing ideas and digital approaches and tools.

2.10 During the COVID19 pandemic, councils have faced enhanced challenges around engaging residents and communities in planning. This is not necessarily a new issue – prior to the pandemic, it was difficult to reach communities and obtain their engagement in built environment matters.

2.11 Moving to digital site notices provides the opportunity to hold richer data within notices. With a digital notice (as opposed to the existing physical site notices) there is an opportunity to develop something that could, for instance, go into a map-based tool, and illustrate all site notices in a particular area. Additionally, this digital information could include more than just that planning application site – it could be a gateway to lots of other consultations being made through the planning process.

2.12 User testing has been key to the development of the project. Testing prototypes with residents and using their feedback to inform iterative development.

2.13 The next phase of the project, which Lambeth will, with this funding stream be resourced to partner, will include developing a standard set of data. The importance of being at the table as one of the influencers of these developing standards is not to be underestimated. The standards will build on learning and define metrics that can be used for a future planning notice, focusing on Major developments. Additionally, a set of non-technical standards for notice data will be produced. Again, to be part of the conversation and informing those standards is therefore something Lambeth will benefit from.

2.14 Ultimately – the project should see an enhanced user experience and improved customer, resident, and businesses satisfaction. The chance for savings would likely be in improved engagement and lower challenges from, for instance, JR's, to simply the number of complaints received by the council about local development and lack of engagement.

Schools Digitisation

2.15 Lambeth currently have 70 maintained schools and we are responsible for the financial accounting and review of processes within schools. The current system for collecting financial data from schools is still operating via a labour-intensive manual input for officers on monthly, quarterly and yearly basis. Many of the maintained schools in Lambeth have separate finance teams managing the accounts and reporting which leads to inconsistency in the submission of information for the LA and also increased risk of human error.

2.16 The need for there to be a consistent platform for electronic data submission and monitoring was highlighted with COVID 19 pandemic, where 47% of Lambeth maintained schools had difficulty meeting any Council deadlines due to not having financial records accessible to submit to Council as were not on site or had no access to the school.
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2.17 There is a need to for the Council to have accurate easy assessable data from the schools so that officers can focus their time and attention to proactively support schools in financial difficulty.

2.18 The aim of the school's digitalisation program is for the council to have a bespoke secure environment to efficiently collect and initially analyse financial data. The analysis needs to be linked to national and local benchmarking information that will ensure that schools in Lambeth model their efficiency on best practice. This platform will also have the capabilities to then have interface options into Oracle cloud systems to support all year end processes to ensure all schools financial information is reported accurately in the annual accounts and for audit purposes with the Department of Education and the Education & Schools Funding Authority.

2.19 The benefits will be for schools to provide timely updates and enable the Council to identify issues and provide the opportunity to put in place additional support and assurance arrangements.

3. FINANCE

3.1 The schemes and projects set out above are being delivered within the Digital Lambeth Strategic Programme as approved by Cabinet in March 2021.

3.2 The capital drawdown request for the schemes can be found in the table below

Objective	Project	Finance £ (000)
Creating Economic Advantage	Opportunity Lambeth	200
	Digital Planning	200
Innovating Public Services	Schools Digitisation	100

3.3 As the programme progresses there may be opportunities to attract private investment (financial and non-financial), grants, and projects may enable the generation of income. However, these have not been quantified as yet and do not currently form part of the council's medium term financial plan.

3.4 Benchmarking Value

Each of the identified projects have passed through internal governance processes for approval.

Where relevant this has included and ensured VFM through:

- Project initiation documents
- Business cases
- Procurement reports
- Benefit profiles

4. LEGAL AND DEMOCRACY

4.1 There are no legal matters arising from this report, but officers must ensure that they comply with the Council's Contract Standing Orders and, where necessary, the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, when advertising, evaluating, and awarding contracts pursuant to this programme.

4.2 This proposed key decision was entered in the Forward Plan on 26 July 2021 and the necessary 28 clear days' notice has been given. In addition, the Council's Constitution requires the report to be

published on the website for five clear days before the proposed decision is approved by the Cabinet Member. Any representations received during this period must be considered by the decision-maker before the decision is taken. A further period of five clear days – the call-in period – must then elapse before the decision is enacted. If the decision is called-in during this period, it cannot be enacted until the call-in has been considered and resolved

5. CONSULTATION AND CO-PRODUCTION

5.1 Workshops have taken place in each workstream within the Digital Lambeth programme to tease out the details of potential bids which are all designed to resolve problems encountered by departments in the council or improve services for residents.

5.2 A wide degree of consultation has taken place in formulating this project. The workstream group where the project sits in the programme has representation from across their relevant Strategic Directorate and the project has been reviewed at programme board.

5.3 Colleagues in Finance have reviewed the details of the projects as part of the programme board and have confirmed that the project can be capitalised in addition to providing feedback on the financial timescales.

5.4 Consultation with key members whose portfolios will be impacted by projects delivered has taken place and feedback has been taken on board.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

Table 1 – Risk Register

Item	Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Score	Control Measures
OPP LAM 01	Escalating costs based on changing business specifications	2	2	4	Application of project/programme governance and control measures
OPPLAM 02	Objectives and benefits are not fully realised as processes are not changed in the background	2	1	2	Skilled project resource to be onboarded, ensuring the project focuses on all aspects of delivery and change
OPP LAM 03	External stakeholders do not sign up to and/or use portal	3	1	3	Early engagement with External Stakeholders
DIG PLN 01	Delayed start to additional provision	2	3	6	Resource and linking expedited
DIG PLN 02	Failure to find resource and become an active member (losing influence)	10	1	10	Resource & linking expedited
SCH DIG 01	Schools non-Compliance in engagement to use new systems	2	2	4	Early comms and pilot schools engagement in development
SCH DIG 02	ESFA/DFE Benchmarking format Change – impact on	1	2	2	Ensure capability for schools dashboard for

	final dashboard and data updates				updates in line with ESFA/DFE data
SCH DIG 03	TDA process not completed in timelines for current cloud-based system.	1	1	1	Completion of plan to be followed in line with Early engagement from ICT
SCH DIG 04	Schools Team Capacity – delay to start of process	2	1	2	Ensure timeline for schools and Finance team are not in conflict to any other schools deadlines for Schools forum – plan for utilisation of nominated schools pilot support.

Key

Likelihood	Very Likely = 4	Likely = 3	Unlikely = 2	Very Unlikely = 1
Impact	Major = 8	Serious = 4	Significant = 2	Minor = 1

7. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) had been drafted for the Cabinet report which is attached under Appendix A. This has been completed considering implications on each workstream of the Digital Lambeth Strategic Programme as advised by our colleagues in the Equalities Impact Assessment Service. Four EIAs (one for each workstream) were presented at EIA panel on 23rd February 2021, there were no additional recommendations from this meeting. For the purposes of this report, the contents of each have been captured in one report under Appendix B. The projects in all workstreams in the Digital Lambeth Strategic Programme are being designed to have a positive impact on Lambeth residents, especially the most vulnerable and those with the highest need. They will have a positive impact on the Council's ability to fulfil our duty to promote equality of opportunity. Residents will also benefit from new opportunities, improvements in services, and quality of life.

7.2   Key groups impacted:
- Residents and Businesses
- Lambeth housing residents
- Council staff
- Unemployed residents and jobseekers
- Residents with no internet access at home
- Elderly and disabled residents
- Children and young people
- Businesses

7.3   Key mitigations for impacted groups:

- Strategic targets are set in the Digital Strategy and detailed benefits mapping will be carried out for each project during the planning stage. Projects in progress will be reported on monthly and benefits realisation reviews will take place at appropriate intervals. As part of project closure and handover to BAU, methods of measuring the impact of each project will be agreed, including new PIs and reporting measures and post-project reviews.

- Communications are also an integral component of the workstream plans, especially given that many of those who will benefit the most from the projects won't be reached by our usual online communications.

- The Digital Lambeth Programme Board is ultimately responsible for ensuring delivery of the strategic outcomes and reporting on progress to Management Board.

- Project leads will be accountable to the workstream steering group and the Digital Lambeth Programme Board and required to report on progress monthly, using project management tools including highlight reports, RAID (risks, actions, issues and decisions) logs, benefit profiles and benefits realisation plans.

- Each project will have measures set to monitor impact and establish baselines. This will include gathering equalities monitoring data for beneficiaries, where appropriate, and the use of surveys and other forms of consultation.

8.   COMMUNITY SAFETY

8.1   Not applicable

9.   ORGANISATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Environmental

9.1   Not applicable for purposes of this report. Environmental considerations will be included at individual project level and recorded and monitored at the programme level by the Digital board.

Health

9.2   Not applicable for purposes of this report. Environmental considerations will be included at individual project level and recorded and monitored at the programme level by the Digital board.

Corporate Parenting

9.3   Not applicable for purposes of this report. Corporate parenting considerations will be included at individual project level and recorded and monitored at the programme level by the Digital board.

Staffing and accommodation

9.4   Fixed-term project management resource will be resourced externally. This cost is included within our proposed funding envelope. There are no implications for accommodation.

Responsible Procurement

Good Quality Jobs with Fair Pay and Decent Working Conditions

9.5   All procurement and recruitment exercises carried out as part of this programme will met London Living Wage standards.

Quality Apprenticeships, targeted Employment for Lambeth residents and Lambeth Priority Group

9.6   Opportunity Lambeth will include revamping of our digital careers services offers which promote apprenticeships and careers opportunities to our residents

Reduce Emissions: Lambeth Council has a commitment to being Zero Carbon by 2030

9.7   Work within the Schools digitalisation program is aimed to reduce the paper based need within Lambeth schools who still are using methods for storing financial information and will support Lambeth's carbon reduction plan.

Single Use Plastics

9.8   Not applicable for purposes of this report. Responsible procurement considerations will be included at individual project level and recorded and monitored at the programme level by the Digital board.

Positive Health and Wellbeing

9.9   Not applicable for purposes of this report. Responsible procurement considerations will be included at individual project level and recorded and monitored at the programme level by the Digital board.

Other Offers (Innovation)

9.10   Not applicable for purposes of this report. Responsible procurement considerations will be included at individual project level and recorded and monitored at the programme level by the Digital board.

10.   TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

10.1   For the purpose of this report the timetable is relevant only to the approval as recommended in order to allow draw down from the capital budget and align project level funding within the current financial year.

10.2   Each of the identified projects through its governance holds detailed delivery plans to ensure projects remain on target.

10.3   The table below details the stages and deadlines for implementing the recommendations:

Activity	Proposed Date
Date published on Forward Plan	26/07/21
Publication on Decisions online	24/09/21
Officer or Cabinet Member Decision	13/09/21
End of Call-in Period (key decisions only)	12/10/21
Begin draw down from Capital finance to start project delivery	25/09/21

Audit Trail				
Name and Position/Title	Lambeth Directorate	Date Sent	Date Received	Comments in paragraph:
Councillor Andy Wilson	Cabinet Member for Finance & Performance	10/09/21	13/09/21	
Councillor Matthew Bennett	Cabinet Member for Planning, Investment and New Homes	10/09/21	13/09/21	
Fiona Mcdermott, Strategic Director	Finance and Investment	03/09/21	09/09/21	
Dami Awobajo, Director of Performance & Business Improvement	Finance and Investment	03/09/21	09/09/21	
Hamant Bharadia, Corporate Finance	Finance and Property	03/09/21	09/09/21	Throughout
Michael O'Hora, Legal Services	Legal and Governance	03/09/21	06/09/21	4.1
Jacqueline Pennycook Democratic Services Officer	Legal and Governance	03/09/21	09/09/21	4.2

Report History	
Original discussion with Cabinet Member	July 2021
Report deadline	13/09/21
Date final report sent	N/A
Part II Exempt from Disclosure/confidential accompanying report?	No
Key decision report	Yes
Date first appeared on forward plan	26/07/21
Key decision reasons	2. Expenditure, income or savings in excess of £500,000.
Background information	March 2021 cabinet report Digital Strategy and Digital Capital Bid EIA
Appendices	Appendix A – Digital Strategy and Digital Capital Bid EIA

APPROVAL BY CABINET MEMBER OR OFFICER IN ACCORDANCE WITH SCHEME OF DELEGATION

I confirm I have consulted Finance, Legal, Democratic Services and the Procurement Board, and taken account of their advice and comments in completing the report for approval:

Signature: _____   **Date:** _____

Post: Dami Awobajo
                   Director Performance and Business Improvement

I approve the above recommendations:

Signature: _____   **Date:** _____

Post: Fiona Mcdermott
                   Strategic Director Finance & Investment

I confirm I have consulted the relevant Cabinet Members, including the Leader of the Council (if required), and approve the above recommendations:

Signature: _____**Date:** _____

Post: Councillor Andy Wilson
                   Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance

Any declarations of interest (or exemptions granted): N/A

Any conflicts of interest: N/A

Any dispensations: N/A