



Maximising Creative and Community Workspace in Lewisham Task & Finish Group

Scoping Report

Date: 16 November 2022

Key decision: No

Class: Part 1

Ward(s) affected: All

Contributors: Assistant Chief Executive (Overview and Scrutiny Manager)

Outline and recommendations

This report defines the role of the Task and Finish Group (TFG), and puts forward a suggested scope for the review.

The TFG is asked to:

- Consider and comment on the content of the report.
- Hear about the work being undertaken on the Council's Affordable Workspace Strategy
- Discuss and define the intended outcomes of the review
- Agree Key Lines of Enquiry
- Agree a timetable for the completion of this work

Timeline of engagement and decision-making

The subject of this TFG was proposed by Cllr Rudi Schmidt, Cllr Billy Harding, Cllr Mark Ingleby, Cllr Aliya Sheikh and Cllr Liam Shrivastava.

The subject and membership of the TFG were agreed by Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 21st September 2022.

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report asks the TFG to consider and finalise the scope of the review and to hear from key officers about the Council's Affordable Workspace Strategy.
- 1.2. The full summary of the title of the TFG is: *How can the Council maximise strategic opportunities for inclusive meanwhile, creative & community workspace in Lewisham, post Borough of Culture, to ensure that we grow and retain talent within the Borough and attract inward investment.*

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The TFG is asked to:
 - Consider and comment on the content of the report and agree the scope of the review.
 - Hear about the work being undertaken on the Council's Affordable Workspace Strategy
 - Discuss and define the intended outcomes of the review
 - Agree Key Lines of Enquiry
 - Agree a timetable for the completion of this work

3. The role of the Task & Finish Group

- 3.1. The role of the TFG is to consider how the Council can maximise strategic opportunities for inclusive meanwhile, creative and community workspace in Lewisham, post Borough of Culture.
- 3.2. The proforma for the TFG can be found at **Appendix A**.

4. Context

- 4.1. The Council's newly adopted Corporate Strategy outlines the Council's vision to deliver for residents. Delivering this strategy includes the following priority outcomes that relate to the Community Workspaces Task and Finish Group:

Open Lewisham - Lewisham is a welcoming place of safety for all, where we celebrate the diversity that strengthens us. This includes that Lewisham will be a place where diversity and cultural heritage is recognised as a strength and is celebrated and also includes the development of a Live Music Strategy.

A strong local economy - This includes a focus on building a thriving local economy, providing support for local businesses and working to attract jobs and businesses to the borough.

- 4.2. TFGs are run as projects, utilising an *agile* methodology, and are intended to be:

Collaborative – officers and councillors working together to address a topical issue of concern, using a shared space on MS Teams

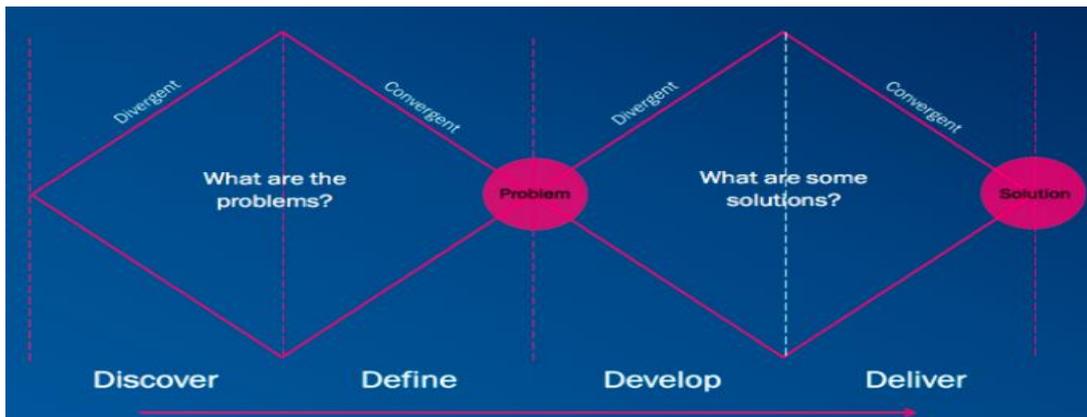
Time limited – to suggest solutions in a timely manner, with allocated tasks, progress checks and deadlines

Flexible – with a mixture of formal and informal meetings, visits, research, user engagement etc

Focussed on residents – service user experience is key, the issue will be clearly defined, and solutions suggested, on the basis of understanding residents' experience

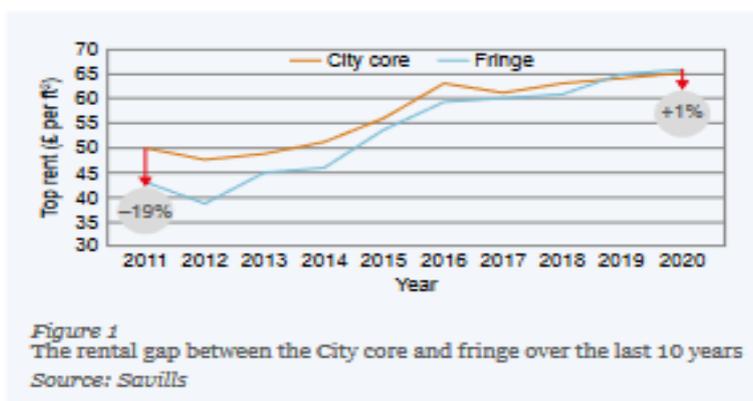
Focussed on solutions – the aim is to take evidence from a wide range of sources and good practice to develop affordable, practical solutions that are evidence based and implementable and that will have a positive impact on the lives of residents.

- 4.3. A ‘double diamond’ approach will be taken which will split the project into two parts (diamonds). The first part is the ‘discovery’ stage. The issue (the topic of the TFG) is the starting point and then research and evidence collection is carried out to really understand the issue and define it more clearly. Once the issue is well understood and well defined, the second stage begins. Further research and evidence collection is carried out, seeking inspiration from elsewhere and working with a range of different stakeholders and experts to investigate potential solutions. Then a clear set of recommendations can be produced.



Businesses and Workspaces in London

- 4.4. London has always been expensive for businesses but costs have increased rapidly over recent years. Furthermore, according to Savills, costs in non-central London locations have increased most rapidly. Savills highlight that what was once the “affordable fridge” is increasingly just as unaffordable as central locations. For example they state that whilst the City Core locations experienced increases in rent of 29 % over the last 10 years, fringe central locations experienced rent rises of up to 58% over the same period.¹

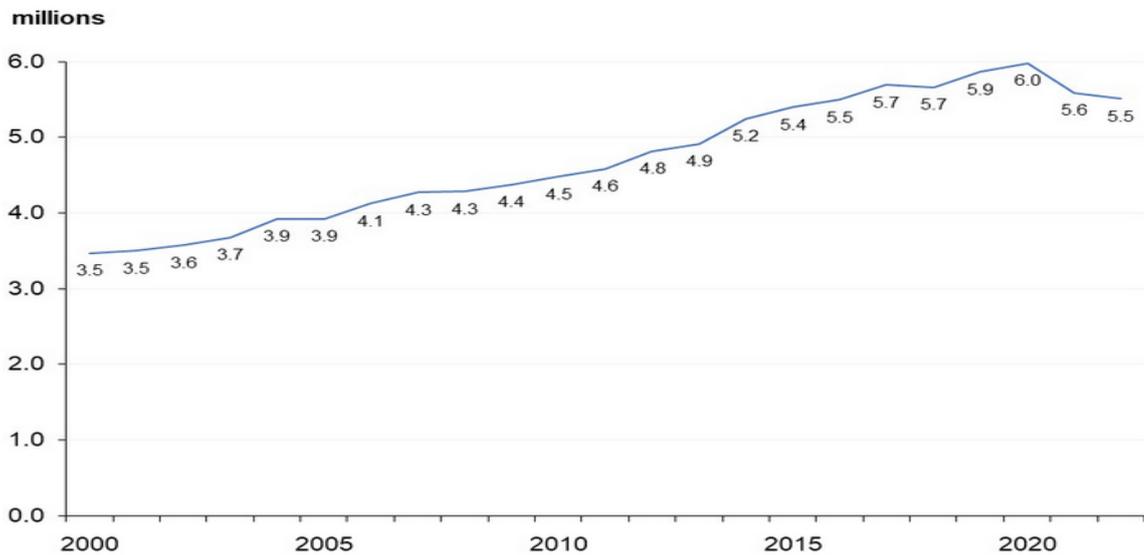


- 4.5. There were 5.6 million businesses in the UK in 2021 of which 5.5 million were SME

¹ British Council for Officers, Affordable Workspaces: A solution not a problem, July 2021
<https://pdf.euro.savills.co.uk/uk/office-reports/bco-affordable-workspaces.pdf>

(Small and Medium-sized enterprises). These figures showed a decrease since 2020 reflecting the challenges faced by the pandemic on many businesses. However up until 2020 there had been a steady rise since 2000 in the numbers. 74% of businesses at the start of 2022 employed no other employees. In London in 2022 there were 1 million private sector businesses and London has the highest density of businesses per adult population in the UK.²

Figure 1: Number of private sector businesses in the UK, 2000 to 2022



BEIS

- 4.6. In 2019, LB Lewisham contained just under 11,000 registered businesses, 91% employing less than 9 people, higher than the London average. The professional, scientific and technical sector is the most prominent in Lewisham when measured by total business count with strong representation from management, computer and general business consultancies, 26% of the total business count. Specialised design, architectural and engineering firms are also well represented. The human health and social work sector is the largest employer, accounting for 18% of all employment in the borough.³

Affordable Workspace

- 4.7. Affordable workspace is defined in the London Plan⁴ as “workspace that is provided at rents maintained below the market rate for that space for a specific social, cultural, or economic development purpose.” The Plan goes on to state that it “can be provided and/or managed directly by a dedicated workspace provider, a public, private, charitable or other supporting body; through grant and management arrangements (for example through land trusts); and/or secured in perpetuity or for a period of at least 15

² Business Population Estimates for the UK and Regions 2022, Dept. of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

³ London Councils, London Business Profiles, Lewisham, 2019
https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Lewisham%20report_IM.pdf

⁴ The London Plan, 2021, https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/the_london_plan_2021.pdf

years by planning or other agreements.”

Lewisham Affordable Workspace Strategy

- 4.8. With high demand and space at a premium across all of London, Officers in the Council’s Economic Development team have assessed that Lewisham alone needs 21,800 m² of new employment space by 2038 and demand has risen throughout the pandemic. Lewisham’s Draft Local Plan acknowledges the importance of affordable workspace for supporting new businesses.
- 4.9. The Draft Lewisham Local Plan commits all major commercial development to ensuring that 10% of new employment floorspace is delivered as affordable commercial space, which is crucial to growing Lewisham’s economic base.
- 4.10. As part of the Borough’s reaccreditation as a Creative Enterprise Zone the successful plan submitted to the GLA included commissioning an affordable workspace strategy & action plan. This was undertaken in July 2022 and PRD in partnership with RE:DO and Bow Arts were appointed.
- 4.11. PRD have been tasked with producing a draft strategy and action plan for the borough that will do the following:
 - State the council’s commitment to securing affordable workspace
 - Describe the various factors of ‘affordability’ for Lewisham
 - Set out the requirements to meet workspace demand across the borough’s neighbourhoods and sectors
 - Review the council’s options for securing new affordable workspace through planning and development as well as meanwhile use and reusing its own or third party existing assets
 - Support inclusive growth and measures of success that better demonstrate the positive impacts generated
 - Establish a bias for action with clear headline commitments, principles, and planned interventions in an Action Plan, which will be manageable and deliverable by the council
 - Review S106 usage especially in underserved areas of the borough.
- 4.12. Currently PRD are almost finished with the mapping exercise, this will include mapping of current workspaces, development sites and council owned assets. They are also engaging with other local authorities, workspaces in the borough and public sector partners (Goldsmiths/Trinity Laban/Phoenix CH).
- 4.13. The TFG will receive a detailed presentation from officers at their first meeting on 16th November so they can start to analyse the work being completed and consider how it can help shape the review’s findings.

Live Music Strategy

- 4.14. As part of the Council’s newly adopted Corporate Strategy, the Council will be developing a Live Music Strategy. The TFG has requested that this review include investigating potential locations for live music. Any work on this by the TFG, could be done in collaboration with colleagues from the relevant service areas.

5. Nature of expected outcomes

- 5.1. The TFG will work with Council Officers and stakeholders and consider local and national expertise. The group will use the research and discovery work to ensure that:
- The Council has a robust and achievable Affordable Workspace Strategy and Action Plan.
 - There is a comprehensive understanding of the needs of stakeholders and the benefits to the Council and local community of supporting creative and affordable workspaces in the borough.
 - There is an improved understanding of the Council's assets and raised awareness of using assets to support affordable workspaces.
 - There is raised awareness of how planning policy can be used to support affordable workspaces and community workspaces.
 - There is a meanwhile use policy that helps support short-term use of empty buildings where practicable.
 - Through consultation and research there is a greater understanding of potential partners and sources of funding to support community and cultural workspaces.
 - The Council has additional information and analysis that can be used during the creation of the "Live Music Strategy".
 - Further exploration of workspace availability for Lewisham's young people has taken place and an analysis completed of what further work needs to be done in this area.

6. Stakeholder engagement

- 6.1. There are a wide range of relevant stakeholders for this TFG, including:
- Councillor Kim Powell, Cabinet Member for Businesses, Jobs and Skills; Councillor Brenda Dacres, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning; and Cllr James-J Walsh, Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure.
 - Community and Business Groups in Lewisham. (The TFG could undertake a survey or issue a call for evidence examining the challenges and barriers faced by businesses and creatives in the borough.)
 - Affordable workspace Providers in Lewisham.
 - Officers in the Council's Economic Development Team, the Director of Inclusive Regeneration, the Director of Planning, and the Executive Director of Housing Regeneration and Public Realm, the Director of Culture, Learning and Libraries
 - PRD, RE:DO and Bow Arts (in relation to the work they have been commissioned to undertake on behalf of the Council).
 - Workspace Provider Forum.
 - Musicians groups in the borough.

7. Key Lines of Enquiry

- 7.1. The key lines of enquiry (KLOE) could include:
- What are the definitions of affordable workspace and can we agree a definition for

Lewisham?

- What work is being undertaken on the Affordable Workspace Strategy? How can we use the findings and the stakeholder engagement already undertaken to shape the direction of the review?
- What are other London Boroughs doing on this and what does good practice look like? How can we learn from the work of other boroughs in this area?
- Who are our partner organisations and what potential sources of funding are available to support community and affordable workspaces?
- How does the TFG's work feed into the Council's Economic Development Strategy and how does it relate to the newly established Creative Enterprise Zones?
- What do Lewisham's business and creatives say they need to support them?
- What can be done to secure more affordable work space?
- What do our young people need to support them accessing communal spaces such as homework clubs and spaces for creativity?
- Are there groups who are currently excluded from participating in local business and creative community? What are the barriers to participation?

8. Out of Scope

- 8.1. The TFG need to consider the scope carefully to decide whether there are any areas that do not need to be included in the review so focus can be maintained in other areas. Similarly, if there are additional areas that the TFG wish to be included, careful consideration of time and resources needs to take place so that the level of analysis can be sufficient for the group's intended outcomes.

9. Sources of Evidence and Potential Witnesses

- 9.1. It will be important to thoroughly understand the work being delivered currently on the Lewisham Affordable work space strategy. At this first meeting of the TFG the Committee will therefore here from the Council's Economy and Partnership Team who will outline the work currently being undertaken. This can form a basis for the committee's analysis and ensure that the work of the TFG complements the work the Council is already undertaken and prevents duplication.
- 9.2. Carrying out a tour of spaces in the borough looking at existing workspaces and organisations that deliver them as well as examining some of the potential workspaces available in current Council assets. For example, this should include organisations such as Hatcham House and Cockpit Arts in the North of the Borough and Bow Arts and Set Studios in the South.
- 9.3. Hearing from experts and other local authorities such as the London Borough of Brent, LB of Camden and LB Waltham Forest on their workspace strategies and on their borough of culture legacy work where applicable.
- 9.4. Hearing from industry experts such as Capital Enterprise.
- 9.5. Organising a survey or call for evidence via the Council's website seeking the views of businesses and creatives in the borough and details of the challenges they face.
- 9.6. A number of documents have been produced by the GLA which will be of relevance to this review:
- Creating Open Workspaces
 - Flexible Workspace on Our High Streets

- The London Open Workspaces Map
- 9.7. Hearing from the London Workspace Advisory Group. The Workspace Advisory Group (WAG) is an advisory body to the Deputy Mayor of London and the London Economic Action Partnership (LEAP). Members represent the views of workspace providers, users and developers as a sector and act as a conduit between the wider sector and the Mayor and the LEAP.
- 9.8. Hearing from the GLA on their work on Creating Open Workspaces. For example organising visits to their casestudies of good practice including:
- [639 in Tottenham](#) which describes itself as a “landmark for Tottenhams’ creative businesses and entrepreneurs;
 - [Camden Collective](#) which provides free co-working space and pop-up retail in vacant shops and offices; and
 - [Blackhorse Workshop](#) – a refurbished vacant warehouse that has been transformed into a public workshop with space for start-up makers.

10. Timeframe and resources

- 10.1. The timeframe is suggested as 4 to 6 months from the date of the first meeting, depending on the extent of the final agreed scope of the review. The final meeting of the TFG would be likely to be held between the end of March to beginning of May. Throughout December, January and February, stakeholder engagement will take place as well as going on visits and hearing from expertise from partner organisations and other key witnesses. It is suggested that the TFG hold at least one informal meeting per month in addition to the evidence gathering listed above. Key officers for the review will include: The Scrutiny Manager; Officers in the Council’s Economic Development Team; the Director of Inclusive Regeneration; the Director of Planning, and the Executive Director of Housing Regeneration and Public Realm; and the Director of Culture, Learning and Libraries. It is likely that there will be very little activity over the Christmas period as this would be a difficult time for engagement activities and site visits.

11. Financial implications

- 11.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. Elements of the work of the Task and Finish Group may have financial implications and these will need to be considered in due course.

12. Legal implications

- 12.1. The Council’s Constitution provides at paragraph 6.11, Article 6 that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may from time to time appoint sub-committees, to be known as task and finish groups which will exist for a period of no less than 3 months, nor more than 12 months from the date of their creation. It further adds that “Any task and finish group shall consist of 5 members and be established for the purpose of examining a particular issue in depth. The terms of reference of any task and finish group shall be agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee which shall also appoint members to it.”

13. Equalities implications

- 13.1. The Equality Act 2010 brought together all previous equality legislation in England, Scotland and Wales. The Act included a new public sector equality duty, replacing the separate duties relating to race, disability and gender equality. The duty came into force on 6 April 2011. It covers the following nine protected characteristics: age,

disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

13.2. The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

13.3. There may be equalities implications arising from activities undertaken by the Task and Finish Group and it will need to give due consideration to this.

14. Climate change and environmental implications

14.1. There are no direct climate change or environmental implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. Matters considered by the Task and Finish Group may have climate change implications and the Task and Finish Group will need to give due consideration to this.

15. Crime and disorder implications

15.1. There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. Matters considered by the Task and Finish Group may have crime and disorder implications and the Task and Finish Group will need to give due consideration to this.

16. Health and wellbeing implications

16.1. There are no direct health and wellbeing implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. Matters considered by the Task and Finish Group may have health and wellbeing implications and the Task and Finish Group will need to give due consideration to this.

17. Report author and contact

17.1. If you have any questions about this report please contact: Katie Wood, 020 8314 9446

Appendices

Appendix A – Task and Finish Group Proforma

Appendix B – London Councils London Borough Profiles

https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Lewisham%20report_IM.pdf

Appendix C – Cllr Schmidt submission

Background Documents:

GLA, Creating Open Workspaces,

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/regeneration_guide_2_-_creating_open_workspace.pdf

GLA, London Open Workspaces Map <https://apps.london.gov.uk/workspaces/>

GLA, Flexible Workspaces on Our High Streets

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/210316_gla_high_streets_compressed.pdf

Lewisham Draft Local Plan <https://lewisham.gov.uk/-/media/draft-regulation-19-lewisham-local-plan-2022.ashx?la=en>