

Request for Greater London Returning Officer (GLRO) Decision – GLR024-02

Title: London Elects marketing campaign for the 2024 Mayor of London and London Assembly elections

Executive summary:

This decision requests authorisation of expenditure to plan and deliver an integrated marketing communications campaign, to tell the London electorate that the 2024 Mayor of London and London Assembly elections are taking place (raising awareness) and explain the voting process (building knowledge).

Decision:

That the Greater London Returning Officer approves expenditure of up to £450,000 to plan and deliver an integrated marketing communications campaign to deliver two goals:

- to raise awareness among the London electorate that the Mayor of London and London Assembly elections are taking place on 2 May 2024
- to explain the voting process among the London electorate, building understanding about how, when and where to vote.

The exact amount to be spent on the campaign is subject to the Greater London Returning Officer being satisfied with the campaign proposal to reach London voters.

Greater London Returning Officer

The above request has my approval.

Signature



Date

30/11/2022

PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 [Section 69 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006](#) introduced a duty on Electoral Registration Officers and Returning Officers to “take such steps as he thinks appropriate to encourage the participation by electors in the electoral process in the area for which he acts”.
- 1.2 This duty will be carried out in part by the Mayor of London and London Assembly elections marketing campaign. London Elects will amplify EC messages on electoral registration and voter ID as appropriate, and as part of its ‘how to vote’ messaging.
- 1.3 The London Elects campaign will be planned and delivered to ensure balance, defined as reaching London voters across various populations, demographics and communities in a proportionate and cost-effective way.
- 1.4 Balance will be achieved by selecting a media mix that reaches a base profile of London adults, and that does not favour any one group over any other. Owned GLA and TfL assets will be taken as a starting point, and additional media purchased to ensure all groups are reached in broadly equal amounts.
- 1.5 London Elects will work closely with our media planning and buying agency to confirm campaign media channels. Potential media channels include, but are not limited to; outdoor media including GLA poster assets (gifted from TfL); radio advertising; digital audio advertising; video on demand advertising; social media (advertising and organic content); and search (pay-per-click) advertising.
- 1.6 Cost-effectiveness will be achieved using in-house marketing and creative services, by maximising use of free GLA and TfL assets; and by working with local authorities and other relevant organisations to extend the reach of the campaign.
- 1.7 Campaign-planning work will be done with the media-planning and buying agency to ensure as much of London’s electorate as possible is reached via the campaign. Reach delivered via the 2021 marketing campaign will be used as a benchmark, although the media landscape will have changed in the three years since the last elections – so the coverage and frequency of the campaign may vary. Campaign costs may have increased due to a variety of factors, such as inflation; innovation in media; and the increased requirement to achieve cut-through in a cluttered space.
- 1.8 The exact amount to be spent on the campaign is subject to the GLRO being satisfied with the campaign proposal to reach London voters.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1 The objectives of the campaign are as follows:
 - to raise awareness among the London electorate that the Mayor of London and London Assembly elections are taking place on 2 May 2024
 - to explain the voting process among the London electorate, building understanding about how, when and where to vote, and the roles of the Mayor and Assembly.

Campaign KPIs will be set during the media planning process with metrics and stretch metrics.

3. Other considerations

Key risks and issues

Possibility of combined election

- 3.1 There is a possibility that a general election could coincide with the Mayor of London and London Assembly elections on 2 May 2024. Flexibility will be built into the marketing plans to allow for flexibility of messaging should a general election be called for 2 May 2024.

Move to first-past-the post-voting system for Mayor of London election

- 3.2 [The voting system for Mayor of London is now first-past-the-post](#), which means there is no second-preference vote for the Mayor of London. This is more straightforward for voters; but nevertheless, the system will need to be explained to voters as part of the campaign's 'how to vote' messaging. This will be more detailed secondary messaging, likely to be explained via the London Elects website and potentially social media channels, rather than via the campaign's mass awareness advertising.

Timescales

- 3.3 Budget approval is required before agencies can be engaged, including for campaign research and media/advertising.

Working with partners

- 3.4 London Elects will continue working closely and as appropriate with the Cabinet Office, the EC and the London boroughs on campaign planning to ensure any respective campaign activity is complementary.

London Elects will again produce a marketing toolkit, ideally jointly with the EC as per 2021, to broaden reach and ensure London Elects, EC and borough activity is aligned and integrated.

The responsibility to promote electoral registration sits with each Electoral Registration Officer at a local level; this will see local borough campaigns taking place to encourage registration. The London Elects campaign will not encourage electoral registration, but important deadlines will be communicated via appropriate channels to ensure London Elects is communicating 'how' to vote as per its statutory duty.

Boroughs' desire to carry out local advertising (outside of register-to-vote activity) will be noted and the impact of local advertising will be considered in consultation with the media agency. The GLRO will be kept abreast of progress as part of our risk management.

Clear guidelines will also be provided to boroughs including a process for signing off materials that use London Elects advertising creative and branding.

The [Elections Act 2022 will require voters to show photo ID in order to vote](#). The EC has responsibility for the national voter ID public awareness campaign. London Elects will amplify EC messages as appropriate and via appropriate channels to ensure London Elects is communicating 'how' to vote as per its statutory duty.

Reputation

- 3.5 There is a reputational risk for London Elects in delivering a marketing campaign. It is important the campaign is perceived as being unbiased. All organisations and teams, such as the media agency and in-house creative team, will be fully briefed on this to ensure political impartiality. Creative testing and creative approval by the GLRO will also help to mitigate this.

Impact assessments and consultations

- 3.6 The London Elects campaign must be planned and delivered in a way that ensures balance. This means reaching London voters of various demographics and communities across London in a proportionate and cost-effective way. Best practice will be followed to ensure balance, including testing of campaign creative/advertising via research groups; and appropriate briefings emphasising the need for impartiality, to partners and agencies (such as research, media/advertising and creative partners/agencies).

4. Equality comments

- 4.1 Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, as a public authority the GLA must have due regard to the need to: eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and any conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act; and advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 4.2 The construction of the campaign will take into consideration the audience at which the campaign is aimed. In every case, materials are assessed to ensure they are fully accessible and in line with the public sector equality duty.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1 GLRO approval is sought for expenditure of up to £450,000 to plan and deliver an integrated marketing communications campaign for the 2024 Mayor of London and London Assembly elections. This expenditure will be funded from the planned 2024 elections' budget, to be agreed as part of 2023-24 budget-setting process.
- 5.2 The table below sets out the expected and proposed breakdown of the expenditure, which is subject to change as we get closer to procuring these. However, total costs will be contained within the allocated budget of up to £450,000. It is estimated that £100,000 is to be spent in 2023-24; and the remaining £350,000 in 2024-25.

Item	Cost
Paid media	£350,000
Research	£10,000
Production e.g. TfL costs	£45,000
Content	£2,000
Social listening and reporting	£7,000
Contingency e.g. website updates, research	£36,000
Total	£450,000

6. Legal comments

- 6.1 The proposed activity is consistent with the GLRO's statutory obligation to encourage participation in the elections. As noted above, the marketing campaign – to be funded using GLA resources -- must be, and be seen to be, politically impartial.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Action	Timescale
Issue creative brief	July 2023
Issue media brief	July 2023
Creative team response to brief	September 2023
Media agency response to brief	September 2023
Creative development testing	September-October 2023
Media strategy approved	October 2023
Creative production	October-December 2023
Media booking	January 2024
Creative supply to media owners	February 2024
Campaign launch	March 2024
Deadline for candidate withdrawals (candidates finalised)	27 March 2024
Voter registration deadline	16 April 2024
Postal voting application deadline	17 April 2024
Polling day	2 May 2024
Campaign evaluation	May-June 2024

Appendices and supporting papers:

None

Public access to information

Although the GLRO is not subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI Act), the information in this form will be published 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 will be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods will 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

Part 2 Confidentiality: Only the facts or advice whose publication may be prejudicial or commercially sensitive 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: Kelly McMorran Barnard has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms that the Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal as required, and this decision reflects their comments.	✓
The Deputy GLRO has reviewed the request and is satisfied that it is correct and can be referred to the GLRO for approval	✓

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES:

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

Signature



Date

30/11/2022