

**Request for Greater London Returning Officer (GLRO) Decision – GLR024-05**

**Title: LondonElects Website for the 2024 Mayor of London and London Assembly elections**

**Executive Summary:**

A new [www.londonelects.org.uk](http://www.londonelects.org.uk) website was developed for the 2020 London Elections, to keep Londoners up to date on how, when and where to vote in the Mayor of London and London Assembly elections which were scheduled for 7 May 2020 and postponed to 6 May 2021.

The existing website is to be maintained, with some adjustments.

Further security and performance testing – and any associated updates – are needed to ensure that the website is fit for purpose in the run-up to the 2024 election.

In light of the legislative changes to the electoral system for the Mayoral election, and subsequent decision to conduct a manual election count, the current elements that process and display election count information are no longer relevant. These will require amendment to reflect the revised process.

This form seeks the GLRO's approval for budget to cover the tasks required to ensure [www.londonelects.org.uk](http://www.londonelects.org.uk) is prepared for the 2024 London elections.

**Decision:**

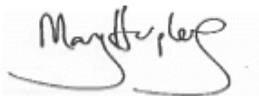
That the Greater London Returning Officer (GLRO):

Approves up to £40,000 expenditure to cover the costs needed to ensure the London Elects website is prepared for the 2024 London Elections.

**Greater London Returning Officer**

The above request has my approval.

**Signature:**



**Date:**

26/01/2023

## **PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE**

### **Decision required – supporting report**

#### **1. Introduction and background**

- 1.1 The London Elects website informs users when, where and how they can vote in the Mayor of London and London Assembly elections.
- 1.2 The London Elects website was significantly updated in 2019, ahead of the deferred 2020 elections.
- 1.3 The current website structure is to be preserved for the 2024 elections, however some work is required.
- 1.4 Penetration/security testing is required to test for current vulnerabilities and ensure the site is resilient to cyber-attacks. Performance testing is needed to ensure that the website will operate optimally, even under high demand.
- 1.5 Following a change in law to implement a first past the post (“FPTP”) system for the Mayoral election, the GLRO has, after extensive consultation with stakeholders, decided that on balance the count for 2024 should be a manual process for all three contests: the Mayoralty, Constituency and London-wide Assembly members. In reaching this decision (GLRO Decision 24-01) the GLRO noted that the GLA Election Rules 2007 (as amended) already contain provision for a GLA election to be conducted manually either alone or in combination with another poll on the same day. The change to a manual count makes the live count aspects of the website redundant, and in need of potential replacement.
- 1.6 The exact amount to be spent on the website is subject to final decisions on how the count will be tracked and the detailed quotes associated with this work.

#### **2. Objectives and expected outcomes**

- 2.1 The London Elects website is there to inform users of when, how and where they can vote. It provides a key avenue for the voter information tasks within the purview of the GLRO.
- 2.2 It must be robust, clear, accessible and secure, so all users can access the information they require and can vote.

#### **3. Other considerations**

##### Key risks and issues

- 3.1 **Security risk:** The website was last given a full security test in early 2021. It has therefore been recommended we carry out a full penetration/security round of testing to minimise the risk of attack.

#### **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 to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 4.2 Any site changes need to be constructed to fully meet the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018, which aim to make websites (and mobile applications) of public sector bodies more accessible to users, particularly persons with disabilities.

## 5. Financial comments

- 5.1 GLRO approval is being sought for expenditure of up to £40,000 to cover the extra costs needed on the London Elects website for updates to ensure optimal performance, changes in legislation and accessibility requirements.
- 5.2 The £40,000 cost of the London Elects website will be funded from the Elections budget. The expenditure is anticipated in the 2023-24 financial year in readiness for the elections in May 2024. Any underspend will be returned to the Elections reserve.

## 6. Legal comments

- 6.1 The proposals are consistent with and support the activities of the GLRO in the 2024 GLA elections.

## 7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Action	
Decision on count replacement modalities	April 2023
Live count replacement	June 2023
Penetration/security testing	January 2024
Polling and Count	May 2024

### 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:**

Ajay Patel 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:**

16/01/2023