

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR DIRECTOR DECISION – DD2678

Title: Improving social outcomes for Londoners

Executive Summary:

This decision form seeks the Executive Director's approval for expenditure of up to £67,500 of GLA budget in 2023-24 to contribute towards a social evidence base to inform the work of the GLA and London partners. This includes research into safeguarding of people seeking asylum, better understanding the needs of d/Deaf migrant Londoners, and research into the link between rising poverty and labour market outcomes.

It also seeks approval to receive and spend £70,000 of grant funding from the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to support Ukrainians in London across 2023-24 and 2024-25.

Decision:

That the Executive Director of Communities and Skills approves:

1. expenditure of £67,500 of GLA budget for 2023-24 to contribute towards the social evidence base
2. receipt of £70,000 of grant funding from the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities to support Ukrainians in London
3. expenditure of this £70,000 across 2023-24 and 2024-25 to support Ukrainians in London.

AUTHORISING DIRECTOR

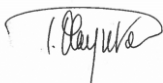
I have reviewed the request and am satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.

It has my approval.

Name: Tunde Olayinka

Position: Executive Director,
Community and Skills

Signature:



Date:

11/12/2023

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. This decision form seeks approval for expenditure of £67,500 of GLA budget for 2023-24 to contribute towards a social evidence base. We refer to a social evidence base to mean the collation of a robust set of data on a broad range of policy areas from economic fairness and poverty to social integration, regeneration and equalities.
- 1.2. Three research projects have been selected, prioritised based on urgency and promotion of intersectional approaches to deepen the GLA and the Mayor's understanding of Londoners who experience marginalisation and exclusion.
- 1.3. The first research project will commission a baseline study on the policies, procedures, capacity and service design in relation to safeguarding for asylum and refugee grassroots organisations. Many small civil society organisations supporting refugees and people seeking asylum in London are dealing with complex safeguarding cases and interacting with complex statutory safeguarding systems and frameworks in a way they have not needed to previously. In order for civil society groups to identify system failings, gather evidence and advocate on behalf of their clients it is crucial that they have the right governance, resources and capacity to address issues effectively.
- 1.4. The second research project will commission research into the barriers to basic rights, entitlements and services for d/Deaf migrant Londoners to supplement the Mayor's commitment to the British Sign Language Charter. This research will build on evidence gathered by the UCL's Deaf Migrants Project, which brought stakeholders and experts together with Deaf migrant Londoners, has provided an initial exploration of the barriers faced by Deaf migrant Londoners, and also some provisional exploration of the role that key stakeholders might play in overcoming those barriers. Learnings from the project were discussed amongst Deaf stakeholders who identified the need for further research in their own writeup of discussions
- 1.5. The third research project will commission research into the links between poverty / the cost-of-living crisis and labour market outcomes – such as the struggles associated with in-work poverty. The project will further support the expansion of the GLA's understanding of the extent of discrimination Londoners face in the workplace, supporting delivery of flagship programmes including the Workforce Integration Network, and the night-time economy.
- 1.6. This decision also seeks approval for the receipt of £70,000 grant funding from the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and expenditure of the same towards supporting Ukrainians in London. This is a continuation of funding from DLUHC, with the previous year's funding approved under DD2618. More than 19,000 Ukrainians have arrived in London on the Homes for Ukraine Scheme. Many continue to face difficulties in accessing suitable, long-term accommodation and some face acute homelessness challenges. As the war continues, there is an increasing need for advice to support Ukrainian families to understand their options to remain in the UK. There are wider integration needs amongst new arrivals, including support to learn English, access to good employment and support to process trauma and meet the needs of children and young people.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

Research projects to improve social evidence base

- 2.1. The research aims to contribute towards a social evidence base, designed to bring together existing and new sources of intelligence on social policy so that teams have consistent information for briefing,

policy making and monitoring, collating and publishing a comprehensive range of evidence to support Mayoral priorities.

- 2.2. Communities and Social Policy propose three research projects to contribute towards this aim. Each research project will seek to build the GLA's understanding and capacity to respond to priority issues impacting Londoners who experience marginalisation and structural exclusion.
- 2.3. The first research project will seek to establish a 'baseline' understanding of the policies, procedures, capacity and service design in relation to safeguarding for asylum and refugee grassroots organisations. This research will be presented to the London Strategic Migration Partnership (LSMP) and connected fora in order to inform the funding and commissioning strategies of local authorities and funders, and support the accountability of the Home Office and their commissioned providers in delivering on safeguarding duties. The research will also make recommendations, providing resources including process maps, blueprint policies and best practice examples to inform the development of robust safeguarding procedures in civil society. This project will be commissioned up to a value of £25k.
- 2.4. The second research project will provide an in-depth research report into the barriers to basic rights and entitlements and services for d/Deaf migrant Londoners. In addition to reporting into the London Strategic Migration Partnership this project will continue to feedback to groups representing d/Deaf Londoners. The aim of this research would be to improve the GLA's understanding of barriers, promoting an intersectional approach looking across protected characteristics such as race and gender, and to make recommendations to service design to support partners to better meet the need of d/Deaf migrants, deliver on the Mayor's commitment to d/Deaf communities following the signing of the British Sign Language Charter, and support partners in holding statutory services to account on the inclusion of d/Deaf Londoners. This project will be commissioned up to a value of £25k.
- 2.5. The third research project will look at the links between rising rates of poverty, the cost-of-living crisis and labour market outcomes such as struggles associated with in-work poverty. This will support the expansion of our background knowledge on the delivery of the Workforce Integration Network (WIN) programme to inform an understanding of what other groups could benefit from inclusion in the programme. Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups are particularly likely to be in in-work poverty, who are among the most marginalised groups in London's labour market and a particular priority for the WIN programme. The research will also be able to support an intersectional approach, looking at how protected characteristics, but also immigration status, could act as barriers to access and progress in the workplace. A particular focus on work in the night time economy will also help to shape the research questions. The benefits of this work will include providing deeper, London-specific insights to help address the wider effects of poverty including access to housing, access to welfare and equity in the labour market. This project will be commissioned up to a value of £17.5k.

Support for Ukrainian arrivals to London

- 2.6. Funding has been provided by DLUHC to support arrivals to London from Ukraine, including arrivals under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme. Coordination of London boroughs is primarily provided through London Councils, with the GLA providing support to this, alongside facilitating engagement with voluntary and community sector organisations and providing a strategic link into the London Strategic Migration Partnership.
- 2.7. This funding will be used to maintain the team's capacity to support this work and to contribute relevant streams of work to improve access to advice and support. This will be primarily through contributions towards existing GLA programmes to provide tailored context for Ukrainians, including the Migrant Londoners Hub and the map of services. The funding will also enable investment into specialist advice services to meet the needs of Ukrainians, including matters related to immigration advice, employment, housing and psychosocial support, as appropriate. Delivery of work will need to comply with the terms of the grant agreement.

- 2.8. Subject to approval from the DLUHC the intention is for any underspend from the 2023-24 financial year to be carried forward and allocated in 2024-25 towards the same purpose.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. Poor access to services and social connections has a particularly deleterious impact on people seeking asylum with additional protected characteristics. Our work with partners in particular has identified significant concerns about safeguarding of people seeking asylum, especially those living in contingency hotel accommodation. The research proposed in this Decision will take an intersectional approach to understanding the needs of asylum-seekers with protected characteristics and will seek to work with equity-led civil society organisations in order to maximise our reach.
- 3.2. The experiences and needs of Deaf Migrants in London have historically been poorly understood by researchers and policy makers. On the 23 and 24 February 2023, the experiences and needs of Deaf Migrants living in London were explored over a two-day event at UCL. The aim of the project was to examine potential areas for future research with this population, the current service provision in London, and to identify how best to influence policy at a national and local level to improve outcomes for Deaf Migrants in London. Deaf Migrant Londoners' own participation was centred through the work. Research proposed in this Decision seeks to provide additional insight into the experiences of Deaf Migrants in accessing services.
- 3.3. Any commissioning processes will ask potential partners to demonstrate how their projects are inclusive of a diverse group; and actively work to eliminate discrimination on the basis of the nine characteristics protected in the Equality Act 2010. To ensure the highest standards of equality, diversity and inclusion are upheld, the GLA will use outreach and engagement approaches to target activities at particular groups that are less able to engage, or that face greater barriers to engagement, to enable them to participate, while ensuring that activities are open and accessible to all Londoners. In particular, the research projects will focus on d/Deaf Londoners, Londoners with safeguarding vulnerabilities which will include an intersectional approach highlighting issues such as gender based violence and the specific needs of LGBTQI+ asylum-seekers.
- 3.4. The guidance and resources will be produced in accordance with best practice for accessible communications. The production of materials in multiple languages will support Londoners with limited English; and improve access to users with low reading comprehension.

4. Other considerations

- 4.1. These projects support the delivery of All of Us: the Mayor's Strategy for Social Integration; and the Recovery Missions to enable access to 'good work' and a 'robust safety net'. These programmes also help address challenges highlighted in other missions, including commitments to support young people and to build stronger communities. All these programmes seek to tackle the inequalities that pose barriers to Londoners with protected characteristics in work, in the asylum system, and in terms of their access to services.

Risk and issues

- 4.2. There is a risk that the research projects fail to tender a good quality provider. In order to mitigate this, officers will ensure a wide pool of researchers are invited to tender, that the drafting of the tender is deliverable within the budget and time allocated, and also undertake market engagement as necessary. The tender will include scoring based on both quality of the proposals and also cost to ensure that the overall successful project will achieve the best value for money.
- 4.3. There is a risk to the delivery of work for Ukrainian arrivals given the granting of funds in Q4 of the 2023-24 financial year. To mitigate this, officers will engage with the DLUHC in order to ensure that any underspend from this financial year can be carried forward, and that projects are designed in

collaboration with broader migration programmes to maximise value and provide additional continuity of support to Ukrainians in London.

- 4.4. There is a risk that research projects will not be able to deliver good quality research in a tight timelines, and that the outputs will not be useful to inform strategic interventions at a London level. To mitigate this officers will undertake a competitive tender to evaluate the suitability of researchers and implement robust monitoring throughout the research delivery phase. Research outputs will feed-back to strategic partnership groups, including the London Strategic Migration Partnership in order to ensure that the findings and any recommendations are visible at a strategic level in London.

Declarations of interest

- 4.5. There are no declarations of interest to make from officers drafting this Decision. All commissioned projects will undertake a fair and transparent tendering process where any relevant declarations of interest will be made.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1. This decision seeks approval for the following:

- expenditure of £67,500 of GLA budget for 2023-24 to contribute towards the social evidence base
- receipt of £70,000 of grant funding from the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities to support Ukrainians in London
- expenditure of this £70,000 across 2023-24 and 2024-25 to support Ukrainians in London

- 5.2. The expenditure of £67,500 in 2023-24 will be funded from the Social Evidence programme budget.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1 The foregoing sections of this report indicate that the decisions requested of the Executive Director of Communities and Skills (the "Director"), concern the exercise of the GLA's general powers and fall within the GLA's statutory power to do such things considered to further or which are facilitative of, conducive or incidental to the promotion of social development within Greater London and in formulating the proposals in respect of which a decision is sought officers have complied with the GLA's related statutory duties to:

- pay due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people;
- consider how the proposals will promote the improvement of health of persons, health inequalities between persons and to contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom;
- consult with appropriate bodies.

- 6.2 In taking the decisions requested, the Director must have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty; namely the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, and to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation) and persons who do not share it and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). To this end, the Director should have particular regard to section 3 (above) of this report.

- 6.3 Officers are reminded to comply with the requirements of the Contracts and Funding Code, when they procure services or supplies or award grant funding in furtherance of the two projects set out in the first and third decisions, above. Furthermore, officers are reminded to put in place appropriate contracts and grant agreements between the GLA and the relevant service providers and/or grant recipients. Finally, officers should ensure that all such contracts and grants include break clauses, lest any future mayoral administration decide not to proceed further with the programme.
- 6.4 The second decision, above, seeks approval to received £70,000 funding from DLUHC. Officers should ensure that the GLA comply with any conditions, which DLUHC has placed upon the funding.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Scoping work for research	December 2023
Procurement for research	December / January
Contract Award	January 2024
Interim Findings	March 2024
Final Report Dissemination	May/June 2024

Appendices and supporting papers:

None.

Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) and will be made available 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 can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary. **Note:** This form (Part 1) will either be published within one working day after it has been approved or on the defer date.

Part 1 - Deferral

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? NO

Part 2 – Sensitive information

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under FoIA should be included 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:

Hannah Boylan has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Assistant Director/Head of Service:

Navprit Rai has reviewed the documentation and is satisfied for it to be referred to the Sponsoring Director for approval.

✓

Financial and Legal advice:

The Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal, and this decision reflects their comments.

✓

Corporate Investment Board

A summary of this decision was reviewed by the Corporate Investment Board on 11 December 2023.

✓

INTERIM CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER:

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

Signature:



Date:

11/12/2023