

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2845

Continuation of financial and employment rights activity, and innovations to improve access to quality local welfare and advice

Programme: Reducing Inequalities (Financial Hardship 2026-27)

Executive summary:

This Assistant Director Decision seeks approval to spend up to £55,000, from the GLA Mayor budget for 2026-27, to continue activity from existing projects that drew on funding from the GLA Mayor Budget for 2025-26, under cover of DD2763 and MD3285, that:

- helps low-income Londoners understand and assert their financial and employment rights
- improves access to quality local welfare and advice, through innovations in evidence-based design and delivery.

The activity will help to ensure that Londoners' incomes meet their everyday needs; and that they are supported to benefit from economic growth. It will act as a partial response to the recent and ongoing inflation to living costs; and the recent enactment of key government legislation/policy relating to workers' rights and local crisis funding. ADD2845 is part of Reducing Inequalities programme, MD3391. MD3391 delegates authority to the Assistant Director for Health Children and Young Londoners to approve expenditure. However, subsequently Tom Rahilly, the Assistant Director for Communities and Social Policy, was made SRO of the programme.

Decision:

That the Assistant Director of the Communities and Social Policy Unit approves spending up to £55,000, in 2026-27, to continue existing work that helps low-income Londoners understand and assert their financial and employment rights; and improves access to quality local welfare and advice, by supporting innovations in evidence-based design and delivery.

This spend comprises:

- up to £40,000, in 2026-27, to maintain and promote the Cost of Living and Employment Rights Hubs on London.gov.uk
- up to £15,000, in 2026-27, to produce a resource pack to support the rollout of the Local Welfare and Support Framework to boroughs.

AUTHORISING ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/HEAD OF UNIT

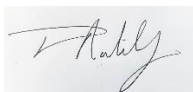
I have reviewed the request and am satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.

It has my approval.

Name: Tom Rahilly

Position: Assistant Director,
Communities and Social Policy

Signature:



Date: 8 June 2026

PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. This Assistant Director Decision (ADD) seeks approval to spend up to £55,000, from the GLA Mayor budget for 2026-27, to continue activity that:
- supports low-income Londoners to understand and assert their financial and employment rights
 - improves access to quality local welfare and advice through innovations in evidence-based design and delivery.

The activity will help to ensure that Londoners' incomes meet their everyday needs; and that they are supported to benefit from economic growth.

- 1.2. Spending on the activities set out in this ADD is part of the overall programme budget for income maximisation/child poverty and working with central and local government to tackle poverty, which form part of the Reducing Inequalities programme (see Mayoral Decision (MD) 3391).
- 1.3. All the proposed activity is a continuation/development of existing projects that drew on funding from the GLA Mayor Budget for 2025-26, under cover of Director Decision (DD) 2763 and MD3285. DD2605 and MD3157 refer to earlier phases of the work that took place in 2022-23 and 2024-25 respectively.
- 1.4. The Cost-of-Living Hub and the Employment Rights Hub (both hosted on London.gov.uk) contain information and guidance on a wide range of financial entitlements and employment rights. They also signpost users to trusted and expert sources of advice and support. Both Hubs are updated to include new information about changing rights and entitlements. For example, in 2025-26 the Employment Rights Hub was redeveloped in line with new rights from the Employment Rights Act 2025.
- 1.5. Collectively, both Hubs have had over 1.15 million views and 680,000 users since October 2022. Since April 2024, just under 12,000 users have used the Cost of Living Hub's embedded benefits calculator tool – through which over £6.1 million in unclaimed benefits has been identified. Both Hubs remain relevant to contextual issues – including growing concerns about rising living costs resulting from the conflict in the Middle East; and continued changes to employment rights arising from the Employment Rights Act 2025 and the government's broader Plan to Make Work Pay.
- 1.6. Alongside this, the GLA developed a Local Welfare and Support Framework to strengthen boroughs' ability to gather data required for the evidence-based design and delivery of local welfare and advice services. The aim is to improve quality and outcomes for service users; and allow the collation of city-wide outcomes data. The framework was piloted with two boroughs in 2025-26; the framework was shown to strengthen boroughs' capability to collect and use data, with various operational and strategic benefits. Lessons were compiled, with the aim to redevelop the framework into user-friendly resources to support wider rollout of the framework across London.
- 1.7. The new Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF) was introduced in April 2026. This – coupled with the Department for Work and Pensions' (DWP's) focus on generating evidence to support learning, and inform future resource considerations – underscores the framework's value and relevance to wider partners. The resources will be framed as a resource to help boroughs meet new data requirements. We will continue to share learning directly with the DWP, to inform evolving data practices for the CRF.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

Element 1: Maintaining and promoting the digital Cost of Living and Employment Rights Hubs

Overarching objectives

2.1. The overarching objective of this activity is to help Londoners ensure that:

- their incomes meet everyday needs
- they are supported to benefit from economic growth.

It will do so by raising awareness of a wide range of financial and employment rights and entitlements; and the support services available to assert these.

Delivery method

2.2. This ADD seeks approval to spend up to £40,000 on updating the Cost-of-Living and Employment Right Hubs on london.gov.uk. These updates will:

- ensure the hubs contain the most up-to-date information about new and changing entitlements
- promote the hubs to Londoners who would most benefit from the information they contain.

2.3. It is anticipated that around a quarter of the budget will be used to cover the ongoing operational costs of key assets on the Hubs. This includes the embedded, London-specific benefits entitlement checker on the Cost-of-Living Hub. (This is a tool that gives users information about the benefits and wider support they may be entitled to, based on various financial and household information they input.) This portion of the budget will also cover updates to the Employment Rights Hub, in line with changes made by the Employment Rights Act 2025.

2.4. How, exactly, the funding will be used for promotional activity, and its split between the two Hubs, is to be determined. This will be finalised after discussion with the GLA's External Relations and Digital teams, to ensure maximum reach amongst target groups and value for money. However, activity is expected to focus on delivering various forms of targeted social-media promotion of the Hubs, and their key assets, to groups that would benefit most from their advice. These groups include (but are not limited to) low-income Londoners; working-age disabled households; younger Londoners; Londoners in insecure or low-paid work; and migrant workers.

2.5. This targeted promotional activity will be complemented by varied promotional activity that does not draw on programme budget, but that is part of a wider communication plan. This includes:

- encouraging stakeholder amplification of the campaign through partners and networks
- embedding the hubs within wider GLA delivery and resources
- using Mayoral/Deputy Mayoral communications channels to promote the hubs and key assets.

Expected outcomes

2.6. The outcomes of the promotional activity for both hubs will depend on several variables, including:

- how the budget is split between them
- the extent to which promotional activity focuses on intensive promotion to a narrow target audience, versus lighter-touch promotion to a wider audience
- the social media channels that are used.

However, based on previous paid-for promotion, it is estimated to result in around 110,000 additional users engaging with the hubs.

Element 2: Procuring a user-resources for the Local Welfare and Support Framework

Overarching objectives

- 2.7. The overarching objective of this activity is to help Londoners ensure that their incomes meet everyday needs. It will do so by improving access to quality local welfare and advice through innovations in evidence-based design and delivery. This will be achieved by supporting boroughs to adopt the Local Welfare and Support Framework.

Delivery method

- 2.8. This ADD seeks approval to spend up to £15,000 to produce a resource pack to support the rollout of the Local Welfare and Support Framework to boroughs. A service provider will be procured in accordance with the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code.
- 2.9. The resources will support boroughs to independently adopt and implement the Local Welfare and Support Framework. Development will focus on creating accessible, user-friendly tools that boroughs can use to guide the process of implementation, data collection and usage. This will be based on lessons learned from the pilot – with a focus on ensuring that resources meet boroughs' needs and requirements.
- 2.10. Development of the resources will be guided by engagement with an established group of boroughs interested in take-up to ensure it is based on user needs. The resources will be finalised and ready for publication by autumn 2026. Publication will include a series of events and communications with key partners to grow awareness among boroughs to encourage take-up.

Expected outcomes

- 2.11. Developing and publishing the user-friendly, evidence-based resources will aid the rollout of the Local Welfare and Support Framework among boroughs ensuring greater consistency across London and making the best use of available resources. As the pilot showed, this will improve the consistency, quality and use of data by boroughs. This, in turn, will improve evidence-based design and delivery of local welfare and support schemes; and, ultimately, improve outcomes for residents experiencing hardship and destitution.
- 2.12. The main objectives of this spend are to:
- provide accessible resources so that boroughs can adopt a standardised approach to data collection and evaluation
 - provide a framework through which boroughs can develop their capability to collect, analyse and use data on service provision and outcomes
 - promote the use of data to inform service design and delivery
 - support the development of a more consistent evidence base to support learning, innovation and policy development
 - facilitate ongoing collaboration and knowledge sharing between boroughs, through light-touch stewardship and peer networks.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. The proposals set out in this ADD are specifically designed to benefit Londoners on low incomes; and Londoners at risk of employment-rights abuses and violations. There is a significant intersection between both groups and Londoners with protected characteristics as defined under the Equalities Act. This is detailed at paragraphs 3.2 to 3.5, below.

Age

- 3.2. 26 per cent of Londoners are living in poverty. Children and single parents are disproportionately impacted, with 35 per cent of London’s children and 53 per cent of single parents living in poverty. In addition, 22 per cent of older people in London live in poverty. Younger Londoners are more likely to be in low-paid insecure work; and are therefore more vulnerable to labour market abuse. Older Londoners are more likely than other age groups to face age-related discrimination in the workplace.

Disability

- 3.3. At present, 31 per cent of households in London, that have a disabled person, live in relative poverty, compared to 24 per cent of households in which no one is disabled. Disabled Londoners are more likely to face discrimination in the workplace, and barriers to employment, than non-disabled people.

Ethnicity

- 3.4. Currently, 38 per cent of households headed by someone from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic background are in relative poverty. This compares to 18 per cent of households headed by someone from a White background. Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic Londoners are more likely to be in low-paid and insecure work than White Londoners; and are therefore more vulnerable to labour market abuse. They are also at higher risk of discrimination in the workplace.

Migrant Londoners

- 3.5. Migrant Londoners face a particularly high risk of destitution (especially those with no recourse to public funds); and are also at higher risk of labour market abuses.
- 3.6. Various aspects of the proposals set out in this ADD will specifically benefit Londoners with protected characteristics. For example:
- Promotional activity around the Cost of Living Hub is likely to focus on groups with protected characteristics – including disabled Londoners, younger Londoners, and migrant Londoners.
 - The content of, and promotional activity around, the Employment Rights Hub is specifically tailored to key groups with protected characteristics – including younger and older Londoners, disabled Londoners, and migrant Londoners.
 - The Local Welfare and Support Framework includes new measures to improve monitoring of groups with protected characteristics, including disability, age and ethnicity. This will give boroughs clearer insight into which groups are being supported, and where gaps remain. This supports more targeted, equitable service delivery; and improved coverage of priority groups.

4. Other considerations

- 4.1. The risks and mitigations are as follows:

Risk	Inherent risk		Mitigation	Residual Risk	
	Prob.	Impact		Prob.	Impact
<p><i>Cause:</i> The government announces substantive changes to welfare benefits, wider cost-of-living support, or employment rights.</p> <p><i>Consequence:</i> The content on both hubs becomes out of date whilst (or shortly before) it is</p>	3	3	Officers will monitor key government announcements; and ensure that content changes are prioritised, to ensure contents of the hub remains up to date.	2	1

being promoted to Londoners. This could lead to incorrect action being taken by Londoners, and reputational damage to the Mayor/GLA.			Development phases for hub planned to align with changes in rights arising from Employment Rights Act 2025 going live (October 2026 and January 2027). User testing will ensure content is accessible and clear – continued refinements will be made.		
<i>Cause:</i> Changes to the make-up of local councils, after recent borough elections, and general capacity constraints might limit borough engagement with development of the resources. <i>Consequence:</i> The resources may not be fit for purpose without wider input from various boroughs.	3	4	Officers will utilise existing borough networks to encourage engagement. The benefits of adopting the framework will be clearly communicated to borough officers, to encourage engagement – drawing on insights from pilot boroughs.	2	2

- 4.2. The activity described in this decision contributes to the delivery of the ‘Working with local and national government to tackle poverty’ and ‘Income maximisation and child poverty’ projects, set out in the Reducing Inequalities delivery plan. It also contributes to the delivery of the Supporting Londoners to Benefit from Growth programme, by ensuring that Londoners at risk of labour-market abuse are aware of, and able to act on, their employment rights. This will help them to sustain employment.
- 4.3. The activity in this proposal also contributes to the delivery of the London Growth Plan’s Inclusion Ambition. It does so by helping Londoners in the bottom 20 per cent of earners increase their disposable incomes, through new benefit claims or findings/sustaining income from employment. It also helps deliver actions in the Inclusive Talent Strategy and Get London Working Plan relating to Fair Working conditions.
- 4.4. Procurement of goods and/or services to deliver the activity set out in this decision will be free and fair and carried out in accordance with the GLA’s Contracts and Funding Code.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1. Approval is sought for the expenditure if up to £55,000 in 2026-27 to continue existing work that helps low-income Londoners understand and assert their financial and employment rights; and improves access to quality local welfare and advice, by supporting innovations in evidence-based design and delivery.
- 5.2. The expenditure breakdown is comprised of:

- up to £40,000, in 2026-27, to maintain and promote the Cost of Living and Employment Rights Hubs on London.gov.uk
 - up to £15,000, in 2026-27, to produce a resource pack to support the rollout of the Local Welfare and Support Framework to boroughs.
- 5.3. The proposed spend is financed by GLA resources from the financial hardship programme budget, as agreed in the budget for this financial year.
- 5.4. This budget is part of Reducing Inequalities Delivery Plan approved under MD3391. MD3391 delegates authority to the Assistant Director for Health Children and Young Londoners to approve expenditure. However, subsequently the Assistant Director for Communities and Social Policy, was made the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) of the Reducing Inequalities Delivery Plan.

6. Planned delivery approach and next steps

6.1. The next steps are as follows:

Activity	Timeline
Procurement of contract for resources	June 2026
Employment Rights Hub promotional activity phase 1	June-July 2026
Development of resources	July-August 2026
Publication of resources	September 2026
Employment Rights Hub promotional activity phase 2	October-November 2026
Updates to Employment Rights Hub 1	October 2026
Updates to Employment Rights Hub 2	January 2027
Employment Rights Hub promotional activity phase 3	January-February 2027

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 be published either within one working day after it has been approved or on the defer date.

Strategic Programmes

Does this decision seek approval for activity falling within the remit of a programme delivery plan? YES

If YES, which programme does this fall within: Reducing Inequalities

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 the 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:

Connor Stevens has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Mayoral Delivery Board

A summary of this decision was reviewed by the Mayoral Delivery Board on 8 June 2026.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, FINANCIAL SERVICES:

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

Date 8 June 2026

Signature

Peter Sebastian