

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2830

Survey provider procurement (2026-30)

Executive summary:

The Opinion Research team is seeking approval to procure a survey-software provider for the next four years (2026-30). Its current contract ends in August 2026.

This decision form proposes a four-year contract with a survey supplier, which will be more cost-efficient than annual agreements. The contract will support effective policymaking, through the development, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and activities. The team sent out a market-sounding questionnaire to suppliers; this drew three responses. Of these, we trialled one potential alternative with current Alchemer users. From their responses, and an analysis of software costs and the process of integrating Talk London with a new platform, we concluded that it would be a better value for money to remain with Alchemer. We can proceed with this supplier using a reseller framework.

The new contract will increase the number and quality of software licences available to the GLA. This, in turn, will improve service delivery across the authority.

This contract follows six years' use of the same software (through four separate successive contracts).

Decision:

That the Assistant Director of Strategy, Intelligence and Analysis approves spending £66,589, for a four-year contract with Alchemer, in order to procure services starting in September 2026.

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: Jeremy Skinner

Position: Assistant Director for Strategy
Intelligence and Analysis

Signature: Approval received via email from
Jeremy Skinner, Assistant Director for Strategy
Intelligence and Analysis Yvette Smith on 1 April
2026

Date: 1 April 2026

PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. The Opinion Research (OR) team, in the City Intelligence Unit, wants to procure a survey provider for the next four years (2026–30). Its current contract with Alchemer ends in August 2026; the team wants to renew this contract for four years, which should be more cost-efficient than making annual agreements. We wish to remain with Alchemer, due to its integration with Talk London. This will be done using a reseller framework.
- 1.2. The OR team, and other GLA teams, regularly conduct online surveys to capture insights from Londoners and stakeholders. This can range from large public consultations to feedback from event attendees.
- 1.3. Online surveys are the main tool for conducting consultations and engagement on Talk London, the GLA’s online community. Procuring online-survey software is therefore essential to keep Talk London going.
- 1.4. This software is used widely across many policy teams, for policy development, stakeholder engagement and programme evaluation. More detailed examples are provided in sections 4.3 to 4.7, below.
- 1.5. The software capabilities enable compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) when collecting sensitive information. This, in turn, enables a commitment to diversity and inclusion.
- 1.6. Previous decisions related to the online survey software are:
 - Assistant Director Decision (ADD) 2329: Procurement of online survey software for the Opinion Research team – approved spend of £50,000 from September 2019 to September 2023
 - Director Decision (DD) 2629: Online survey software – approved spend of £80,000 from September 2023 to September 2024
 - DD2685: Online survey software – approved spend of £20,000 from September 2024 to September 2025.

Overall spend to date on the software is around £93,000, as the full amount requested in DD2629 was not used. If agreed, this decision will take total spend to around £168,000.
- 1.7. The OR team now seeks approval to commission a new four-year licence for online-survey software, from September 2026 to September 2030. This work will be procured in accordance with the Contracts and Funding Code.
- 1.8. The contract will be procured via the reseller framework to ensure a compliant route to market for licensed software.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

Objectives

2.1. The main objectives are:

- to procure online-survey software with Alchemer (the existing provider): this will enable teams throughout the GLA to conduct timely, effective online surveys with external stakeholders; and, in turn, develop, monitor and evaluate programmes and activities
- to allow the GLA to conduct online engagement and consultation, by integrating the online-survey software into Talk London
- to achieve value for money for the GLA by commissioning and managing this contract on behalf of several teams; and increasing the number of licences currently available to the GLA.

Outcomes

- 2.2. OR and policy teams can carry out secure, GDPR-compliant surveys, with a wide variety of Londoners and stakeholders, on policy development and implementation.
- 2.3. The GLA has a secure, GDPR-compliant platform that enables Londoners, the Talk London Community and stakeholders to take part in consultations and engagement. In this way, they can share their views and experiences and inform policy and decision-making at City Hall.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. By carrying out online surveys, the GLA can engage a broad range of demographic and socio-economic groups in research and engagement. The online-survey software will allow the GLA to conduct research and engagement that is inclusive of many Londoners. Alchemer complies with WCAG 2.2AA standards.
- 3.2. Whilst online surveys risk excluding older Londoners and Disabled Londoners, this is mitigated by a range of other approaches to engage Londoners who are not online. These include postal surveys, as carried out for the London Recovery Board's High Streets for All Challenge. Another project engaged young Londoners through surveys carried out online, on paper and via QR code. QR codes were previously used to recruit participants from minority backgrounds during London's cultural events, including Vaisakhi, Black On The Square and St Patrick's Day. In this way, the survey drew a mix of ages, genders and ethnicities.

4. Other considerations

Key risks and issues

- 4.1. There is a risk that the online software does not provide the functionality and user experience required for the GLA's online surveys. This may have an impact on, for example, the question types; and the level of built-in analysis and reporting available. However, the software currently meets GLA needs.

Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

- 4.2. Since being procured in 2019, the GLA's quantitative-survey software has been used across many different policy teams and Mayoral programmes. It facilitates programme and event evaluation; and constitutes an integral part of delivering engagement and consultation through the Talk London community.
- 4.3. Recent Talk London projects that have used Alchemer to inform project development are:

- the Police and Crime Plan consultation
- the Inclusive Talent Strategy for the London Growth Plan
- Clean and Healthy Waterways for the delivering a greener and more climate resilient London programme.

Findings were included in final public reports, and informed policy plans.

- 4.4. The GLA is consulting on a draft Strategic Licensing Policy. Alchemer is being used to host the Talk London survey; and, via London.gov, the wider stakeholder survey with businesses and authorities, and Londoners generally. Software functionality enables results from participant groups to be combined into one report for tracking progress. The platform ensures we meet web accessibility requirements, through screen-reader instructions and language translations.
- 4.5. The annual draft Budget Consultation collects Londoners' views on important matters and policy areas. Results are used to inform the Mayor's annual spending plan with Londoners' needs. Each year, this includes survey delivery on Talk London through Alchemer. It enables accessibility for Londoners, through screen-reader compatibility; and automatic adjustment to different device types. While the survey is ongoing, the platform provides automatic reports to track responses. It also allows tailored email reminders to be sent to specific demographics, to increase engagement. The results provide additional insight to inform spend prioritisation for Mayoral programmes, such as Upgrading London's Infrastructure.
- 4.6. Within the Heat Risk consultation, different groups of Londoners were asked to give their views, through either online and in-person events or Talk London surveys. The events included delivering surveys to young Londoners, some aged under 18. These surveys were created to match the reading grade of young Londoners, and featured accessible design. Paper surveys were provided; and QR codes and offline links were shared with facilitators carrying devices at events. These approaches all contributed to the inclusivity of minority groups, and those with limited digital access. Routing was used for young people requiring additional support. Results fed into the Mayor's programme, Greener and More Climate Resilient; and informed a strategy to help prepare Londoners for hot temperatures.
- 4.7. Every year the Events team, in External Relations, collect feedback and evaluate delivery of the New Year's Eve Fireworks. Since 2024, they have used Alchemer for this. The OR team can use Alchemer functionality to improve Londoners' experience, whilst maximising the data collected to evaluate the event. Data from the 2024 survey informed changes to the 2025 event; and provided a light-touch economic analysis for decision-making. Additional functionality provides different links to increase engagement across all Londoners, including diverse and minority groups. Evaluation of the 2025 event is under way as part of the programme for the Supporting Community, Cultural and Sporting Events in London mandate.

Consultations and impact assessments

- 4.8. An equalities impact assessment has been undertaken. As detailed in section 3.2, above, older and disabled Londoners may be less likely to engage with this platform. To be fully inclusive, each policy programme that is considering this platform should provide additional ways to collect the views of these groups.
- 4.9. A data protection impact assessment has been completed, and approved by Information Governance, to ensure the software meets GDPR requirements.
- 4.10. Using the TfL Reseller and Associated Services Framework will ensure appropriate procurement processes are followed; and the GLA's requirements around climate change and equal opportunities are met.

Declarations of interest

- 4.11. GLA officers involved in the preparation of this form do not have any conflicts of interest to declare.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1. Approval is sought to spend up to £66,589, plus VAT, over the next four years to procure a survey-software provider for the OR team. The payment schedule is shown above in the Decision.
- 5.2. The contract is expected to include 26 licences (including 13 professional licences, three collaborator licences and 10 free full-access licences).
- 5.3. The total four-year cost of the contract with Alchemer is £66,589 plus VAT. This allows for an estimated 6 per cent mark-up on Alchemer's costs. The reseller cost breakdown is as follows:
 - 2026 cost: £16,140
 - 2027 cost: £16,529
 - 2028 cost: £16,792
 - 2029 cost: £17,128.
- 5.4. This will be funded from the cross-cutting budget in CIU, held within the Strategy & Communications directorate, for each of the four years. It should be noted that future years' budget provision will remain subject to the approval of the annual budget-setting process for each year. In the event that budget pressures emerge, limiting the GLA's resources, the proposed contract mitigation will include standard break clauses that would allow for a reduction in the contract usage and/or a full termination, as required.

6. Planned delivery approach and next steps

- 6.1. The OR team will work with the TfL procurement team to ensure the relevant procurement steps are followed, using the Reseller and Associated Services Framework.
- 6.2. The OR team will manage the software, to ensure that all research undertaken delivers the high-quality, robust insight required across the GLA.
- 6.3. The work will be carried out according to the outline below:

Activity	Timeline
Procurement of contract	30 May 2026
Delivery start date	21 September 2026
Delivery end date	21 September 2030

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? NO

Part 1 – Deferral

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? YES

If YES, for what reason: Until contract is awarded.

Until what date: September 2026

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:

Rozerin Dogan 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 30th March 2026.

✓

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, FINANCIAL SERVICES:

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

Signature



Date 30 March 2026