

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR MAYORAL DECISION – MD2643

Title: 2021 Census Information Scheme for London

Executive Summary:

The Mayor is asked to approve plans to organise a Census Information Scheme ("Scheme") for the 2021 National Census between the GLA and London Local Authorities ("LLAs": the 32 London boroughs and the City of London) and come to separate agreements with the functional bodies. The Census provides the most comprehensive information on London's many communities and local areas and will be a significant part of London's evidence base for years to come. The Scheme will enable the GLA and partners to make full use of this unique source.

Under the Scheme the GLA produces analysis of the Census once for all partners across London rather than 33 LLAs and five functional bodies working individually. The Scheme also includes training and support for partners in the use and interpretation of census statistics.

Decision:

That the Mayor approves:

- In principle, the establishment of a Census Information Scheme for the period 2021 to 2031 under section 397 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 in respect of the analysis of information concerning London gathered from the 2021 Census upon the heads of terms set out in Appendix 1, subject to finalisation of the Scheme documentation (to be approved by the Executive Director of Strategy and Communication under delegated powers);
- expenditure of up to £750,000 over the ten-year term of the Scheme at net nil cost to the GLA; and
- receipt of income of up to £750,000 from partners to fund the above referenced expenditure.

Mayor of London

I confirm that I do not have any disclosable pecuniary interests in the proposed decision, and take the decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct for elected Members of the Authority.

The above request has my approval.

Signature:



Date:

7/7/20

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE TO THE MAYOR

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 There will be a national census in 2021 organised by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). This Decision form seeks approval for a proposal to set up a London-wide consortium to fund training, data processing and analysis of 2021 Census outputs for London through the establishment of an information scheme by the Mayor. Census day 2021 will be 21 March 2021 with the main outputs to be released by ONS between March 2022 and March 2023.
- 1.2 Census information is vital to the GLA and other partners as it provides a uniquely detailed portrait of the population of London at a point in time. The 2011 census is still our most detailed source of information of Londoners' characteristics including ethnicity, country of origin and language, workers' occupations and household structures. For many characteristics, it is the only source for small population groups and local areas. A deeper understanding of London's population would not be possible without the 2021 Census to provide detailed information on our communities and for local areas.
- 1.3 There is a long history of collaborative working in London on the census, with some sort of consortium arranged for each census since 1971. Formal information schemes, under the Greater London Authority Act 1999 (GLA Act, as amended), were set up to fund work on both the 2001 and 2011 censuses. The Act allows the Mayor to establish a formal scheme for the collection and dissemination of information relating to any matters concerning London which will form the basis of a London-wide consortium to fund training, data processing and analysis of 2021 Census outputs for London. It is proposed that the Scheme will be open to the five functional bodies.
- 1.4 The 2011 Census Information Scheme gained Mayoral consent (MD662) in November 2010. It commenced in October 2011 and will run until September 2021. So far it has delivered:
 - over 50 reports on census results as they were published;
 - data atlases and tools visualising and providing access data for 2001 and 2011;
 - around 80 specially commissioned census tables providing additional detail for London;
 - further analyses including construction of small area classifications for London and historical borough-level employment estimates; and
 - training on how to access and analyse census data for all partners.
- 1.5 Census outputs continue to inform GLA policies. Over the last two years, census data have been used for example to:
 - estimate numbers of at-risk Windrush Londoners;
 - pinpoint concentrations of EU nationals in the run up to Brexit;
 - target locations where foreign language support will be most effective; and
 - identify areas where Covid-19 may be more prevalent.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1 The LLAs must be consulted before the Mayor approves an information scheme in its final form, particularly as it becomes binding on all 33 if at least two-thirds (22) agree to participate. In early 2019, the GLA consulted each of the 33 LLAs on their requirements for a 2021 Census Information Scheme. Discussions with the functional bodies were held later in 2019. The findings of these

consultations are set out in detail in the proposals paper at Appendix 2. In broad terms their responses were:

- most boroughs agreed that a Census Information Scheme should be arranged for the 2021 Census, and over two thirds indicated that they would consent to it;
- compared to 2011 they wanted more emphasis on training, disseminating information, and documentation;
- there was unanimous support for the estimation and presentation of ward-level data;
- support for meetings and seminars as in 2011;
- fewer reports than were produced for 2011 with shorter reports preferred; and
- little demand for compilation and analysis of older historical data.

2.2 The key steps in establishing the Scheme for 2021 are set out in section 7 below. In brief, once the Mayor has approved the Scheme in principle, the LLAs are asked to note the proposal via a paper to the London Councils' Leaders Committee in September 2020. The Mayor writes to LLAs formally proposing the Scheme in October, and once 22 have assented, the Scheme becomes legally binding on all 33.

2.3 In summary, the finalised Scheme (the heads of terms for which are set out in Appendix 1) will last for the period October 2021 to September 2031 and proposes to deliver services to LLAs and functional bodies in these broad areas:

- training on census topics and geography including standard census tabulations and more detailed census flows data;
- support and advice to partners including user group meetings, seminars and workshops;
- presentation of census data as dashboards and atlases including comparison with 2011 data;
- analyses of London data including migration, travel to work and diversity; and construction of small area classifications for London; and
- membership of various census oversight and working groups to make the case for London, including our response to the consultation on the future of censuses to be held in 2023.

Training and support

2.4 The Scheme will deliver a programme of training in census topics and geography, sources of census data and analysis of census data and sources. Some training may be delivered by workshops and seminars. Training may also be tailored to specific audiences such as health analysts.

2.5 The GLA will need a dedicated census trainer to develop materials (probably in the first half of 2022), and conduct training (the rest of 2022 and into 2023). This would of course depend on how quickly ONS produce outputs. The trainer would lead with other members of the team also contributing.

2.6 The GLA proposes that the user group meetings should continue to be held at City Hall three or four times a year. In addition, we will consider using webinars or virtual meetings.

2.7 The GLA would offer advice and assistance via the census inbox and directly by phone or email.

Data processing and presentation

2.8 The GLA will produce comparisons of 2021 and 2011 census data for borough and ward geographies and re-estimate figures for 2001 on the same basis. As part of this the GLA will document the comparability of data between censuses.

- 2.9 Data will be presented as atlases and thematic dashboards, and also made available as raw data and in formats suitable for boroughs' Geographical Information Systems.
- 2.10 The Scheme will commission a set of London-specific census outputs, adapted to the needs of the GLA and partner organisations. LLAs and functional bodies will also be able to make specific requests for data through the Scheme.

Reporting and analysis

- 2.11 There will be a programme of short briefings on census topics linked to borough data for each topic, and a limited number of more detailed briefings covering migration, diversity and technical topics.
- 2.12 Analyses will include the construction of the small area socio-economic classifications for London as were produced after the 2001 and 2011 censuses. A classification places each area into a group with others that are most similar according to their combination of census-based characteristics such as ethnic group, education and employment and housing tenure.
- 2.13 Analyses will also include the patterns of migration and travel to work into and within London; and further work as agreed with partners.
- 2.14 The final version of the Scheme and associated legal documentation will be approved by the Executive Director of Communications and Strategy through delegated powers under Mayoral Decision Making in the GLA.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1 Under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 the GLA must have 'due regard' to the need to:
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and
 - advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 3.2 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. The 2021 census will be a principal source of information on people sharing these protected characteristics, and often the only source of data on vulnerable and marginalised groups with multiple protected characteristics. A key aim of the Scheme is to provide information to the GLA and partners on vulnerable groups in London. This will enable the development of sound policies and interventions to improve outcomes for these groups. The proposal is expected to have a beneficial impact.

4. Other considerations

- 4.1 As stated in paragraph 1.2 above, the decennial census is the most detailed source of the demographic characteristics of London's population. Information produced by the Scheme will thus provide a baseline for monitoring across all GLA strategies. The data will be particularly relevant to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and Social Integration strategies.
- 4.2 There are however limitations on the detail that be produced for very small populations and rare characteristics or combinations of characteristics. This is necessary to protect individuals' anonymity. No outputs can be released by ONS that allow an individual to be identified, and the GLA (and other data users) will not have access to the record level data.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1 Mayoral approval is sought for the organisation of a Census Information Scheme for the period 2021 to 2031 under section 397 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 and expenditure of £900,000 over the ten-year term of the Scheme. The GLA contribution is a notional £150,000 in staff time. The remaining £750,000 requirement is to be met from:

London Local Authorities (£18,000 x 33 LLAs)	£594,000
Functional Bodies (£18,000 x 4)	£72,000
Contribution from 2011 scheme reserve (held in GLA reserve)	£84,000
Total	£750,000

- 5.2 Approval is therefore also sought for receipt of income of £750,000 from the 33 LLAs and four functional body partners and that the GLA dedicates staff-time up to a value of £150,000 to resource work associated with the Scheme.
- 5.3 The balance as at the end of 2019-20 of the GLA census reserve was £185,000 and after the completion of 2011 Scheme in September 2021 it is currently projected to have a reserve balance of around £100,000 (after accounting for forecast spend of £56,000 in 2020-21 and £29,000 in 2021-22). It will be this balance that will fund the £84,000 referred to in the breakdown provided in paragraph 5.1.
- 5.4 Partner contributions will be received in the first four years of the Scheme with most expected to be collected in 2021-22 and 2022-23. This means that a surplus will be created in the early years which will be placed into reserves at the end of each financial year for the use of the Census Scheme only. Funds will be drawn-down when there may be a shortfall in income to match expenditure to fund the Scheme for the rest of the decade. The draw-down from reserves will be subject to approval via the Authority's decision-making process.
- 5.5 In relation to paragraph 5.4 officers must ensure that they do not commit the GLA into any expenditure on the Census 2021 purchase until the Scheme and related documentation is signed off by all parties and they must also ensure that there are sufficient funds available (including funds transferred to the reserve) to meet costs in any financial year, for the entire duration of the proposed agreement.
- 5.6 The actual costing and phasing of expenditure cannot yet be substantiated in detail at this stage however the spend is to be on GLA staff time, external projects, commissioned tables, software and training and support.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1 Under section 397(1) of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 (the 'Act') the Mayor may make schemes for the collection of information relating to any matters concerning Greater London or any part of it.
- 6.2 Under section 397(3) of the Act a scheme under this section (397) may be made only after consultation with each London local authority, which has taken place (see paragraph 2.1, above). Further, under section 397(4) a scheme under this section will be binding on all 33 of the London local authorities if at least two-thirds of those authorities agree to participate in the scheme. It is proposed that the Scheme lasts for a period of 10 years, from 2021 until the end of 2031.
- 6.3 Under section 397(6) of the GLA Act a scheme under this section may include provision relating to:
- (a) the method by which information to be collected or provided under the scheme is to be analysed;
 - (b) the form in which such information is to be collected or provided;

- (c) the ownership of information collected or provided under the scheme;
 - (d) the method by which information is to be transferred or stored under the scheme;
 - (e) the persons to whom information collected or provided under the scheme may, or must not, be disclosed; and
 - (f) bearing the costs of the scheme.
- 6.4 These matters will be set out in the formal Scheme documentation to be approved by the Executive Director of Communications and Strategy in due course.
- 6.5 In respect of bearing the costs of the scheme (as per 397 (6) (f)), section 397(7) of the Act provides that:
- (a) the costs of collecting or providing information as specified in the scheme is to be borne by the Mayor and/or a London local authority in such proportions as may be specified by or under the scheme; and
 - (b) the recovery of costs in relation to the scheme can be made by the Mayor from a London local authority, by a London local authority from the Mayor or by a London local authority from another such local authority.
- 6.6 These matters are detailed in section 5 above and will be set out in the formal Scheme documentation to be approved by the Executive Director of Communications and Strategy in due course.
- 6.7 Under section 397(8) of the Act a scheme under this section may contain such supplementary provision as the Mayor considers necessary or expedient.
- 6.8 Under section 399(1) of the Act a scheme under section 397 may at any time:
- (a) be revoked by the Mayor; or
 - (b) be varied by the Mayor in accordance with the terms of the scheme or by agreement between the Mayor and at least two-thirds of the London local authorities.
- 6.9 Under section 399(2) of the Act before deciding whether to revoke or vary a scheme by virtue of subsection (1) above the Mayor shall consult each London local authority.
- 6.10 Under section 399(3) of the Act where the Mayor revokes or varies a scheme by virtue of subsection (1) above he shall notify each London local authority of the revocation or variation.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity to set up Census Information Scheme	Timeline
CIS agreed by Mayor	June 2020
Provide details to boroughs for briefing chief executives	Summer 2020
Present paper to Chief Executives' Leaders Committee. This mandates us to formally write to boroughs proposing scheme.	September 2020
Formal letters to Chief Executives inviting them to agree to scheme. Once 22 have done so, Scheme is legally binding on all.	October 2020
Write to functional bodies individually to confirm voluntary arrangements.	October 2020
Write to boroughs to confirm CIS	January 2021 (or earlier)
Send out invoices for payment in 2021	April 2021
Census Information Scheme Commences	October 2021

Supporting papers:

Appendix 1: Deliverable components of the proposed 2021 Census Information Scheme

Appendix 2: Detailed Proposal Paper

Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI Act) 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 approval or on the defer date.

Part 1 Deferral:

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

If YES, for what reason:

Until what date: (a date is required if deferring)

Part 2 Confidentiality: Only the facts or advice considered to be exempt from disclosure under the FOI Act 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:

Richard Cameron has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Sponsoring Director:

Niran Mothada has reviewed the request and is satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.

✓

Mayoral Adviser:

David Bellamy has been consulted about the proposal and agrees the recommendations.

✓

Advice:

The Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal.

✓

Corporate Investment Board

This decision was agreed by the Corporate Investment Board on 29 June 2020.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES:

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

Signature

Date

30 June 2020

D. Gove

CHIEF OF STAFF:

I am satisfied that this is an appropriate request to be submitted to the Mayor

Signature

Date

29 June 2020

D. Bellamy