

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR DIRECTOR DECISION – DD2508

Title: Upgrade of GLA correspondence management system

Executive Summary:

The correspondence system used by the Public Liaison Unit (PLU) and other teams in the GLA is over ten years old and runs on outdated software. A previous (unsuccessful) attempt to replace the system is under long term review and therefore the existing system needs to be urgently updated for security and supportability reasons. This decision form asks for approval of expenditure to upgrade this system to enable the GLA to continue to deliver its commitment to openness and transparency.

Decision:

That the Executive Director of Resources approves:

Expenditure of up to £125,000 over a three year period to upgrade and support the GLA's existing correspondence management system, which comprises:

- £80,000 one off capital expenditure from Technology Group capital budget from financial year 2020-21 for the redevelopment of the existing system; and
- £15,000 per year for three years' maintenance and technical support from External Relations revenue budget to cover financial years 2020-21, 2021-22, and 2022-23.

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: David Gallie

Position: Executive Director,
Resources

Signature:



Date:

18 January 2021

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. In October 2017 the Mayor approved replacement of the GLA's main correspondence system, as approved in MD2180, however the project encountered supplier side issues and the GLA is in the process of recouping and reallocating the expenditure approved within MD2180. The solution and expected outcomes articulated in MD2180 are now under long term review, particularly in light of the inevitable changes brought about following the Covid-19 pandemic, in particular the need to re-focus service provision and save money. The decision made in MD2180 still stands however the delay resulting from the review and the process of recouping expenditure has resulted in an urgent need to upgrade the system for security and supportability reasons and the review process is independent of this expenditure on an upgrade (the review does not preclude expenditure on this upgrade). If the review results in a recommendation not to replace the existing system that decision will be presented back to the Mayor in a new MD. Upgrading the system has become very urgent for security and supportability reasons.
- 1.2. Upgrading the existing system will allow the GLA to continue to deliver its commitment to openness and transparency.
- 1.3. The database being used for this system will be moved to an open source alternative and the operating system (Linux Ubuntu) will be upgraded to the latest version (also open source).
- 1.4. The total cost for this project is expected to be no more than £125, 000 (£80,000 capital and £15,000 per annum over three years).

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1. Delivery of a solution which meets the support and security requirement for the GLA's Technology Group and the functional, reporting and usability needs of GLA's Public Liaison Unit (PLU) and other teams within the GLA.
- 2.2. Value for money will be achieved by leveraging both open source software and reusing existing functionality within the system. For example a list price for upgrading the existing database is over £150,000 and therefore the system is to be ported onto an open source PostgreSQL database architecture instead. In addition, market prices for a replacement system starts at around £300,000. Value for money can thereby be demonstrated by reusing existing components within the system and by making use of open source software.
- 2.3. We have engaged TfL Commercial to discuss options for the procurement approach, and value for money will also be achieved by making use of Crown Commercial Service procurement framework. It is proposed that the software and support services are procured by calling off the Crown Commercial Service 'Digital Outcomes and Specialists' procurement framework or the TfL resellers framework.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. The Public Sector Equality Duty as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Mayor of London as a public authority to have 'due regard' of the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation as well as to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not. Accordingly, this project will take due consideration of the positive and negative impacts on groups with protected characteristics.

- 3.2. Strategic equality, diversity and inclusion objectives are enshrined within the GLA's programmes and activities according to the Mayor's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.
- 3.3. No adverse impacts are identified for the proposed works described in this document.

4. Other considerations

- 4.1. The upgrade of this system is part of the GLA's continuing commitment to openness and transparency as articulated on our London.gov.uk website.
- 4.2. The use of open source software contributes to the GLA's commitment to cost savings and delivering best value for money.
- 4.3. Notable project risks include the following:
 - Poor response to tender. It is critical that potential suppliers with enough knowledge and expertise of the specific technologies used and specific configurations used at the GLA are attracted. Pre-market engagement and specialist procurement using the Crown Commercial Service 'Digital Outcomes and Specialists' procurement framework will be used to address this concern.
 - Security risk due to out-of-date software. This risk is being mitigated by the implementation of the upgrade as quickly as possible.
 - Risk of service disruption during the implementation. This risk will be mitigated by testing the upgraded solution in the GLA's test environment prior to implementation and by taking a full copy of all the components of the system prior to implementing the upgrade.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1. Approval is being sought for expenditure of up to £125,000 to upgrade and support the GLA's Correspondence Management System.
- 5.2. This will be made up of £80,000 from Technology Group Capital 2020-21 Budget and £15,000 per annum for the annual maintenance and technical support as funded from External Relations 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23 budgets. Future funding allocations are subject to the GLA's annual budget setting process.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1. The foregoing sections of this report indicate that:
 - (a) the decisions requested of the Director concern the exercise of the GLA's general powers, falling within the GLA's statutory powers to do such things considered to further or which are facilitative of, conducive or incidental to the promotion of economic development and wealth creation, social development or the promotion of the improvement of the environment in Greater London; and
 - (b) in formulating the proposals in respect of which a decision is sought officers have complied with the Authority'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; and

- 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 and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (race, disability, sex, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment) 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 of this report.
- 6.3. Officers have indicated in section 2.3 of this report that the intention is to procure the software and services from a Crown Commercial Service Framework. Officers must ensure:
- 6.3.1. the framework under which it is proposed the software and services required are to be “called-off” can be used by the GLA by virtue of its procurement by Crown Commercial Service on behalf of bodies such as the GLA in accordance with relevant procurement law;
 - 6.3.2. the software and services required are procured fully in accordance with the requirements of that framework;
 - 6.3.3. appropriate “call-off” documentation is put in place and executed by the successful bidder(s) and the GLA before the purchase of the software and commencement of the services; and
 - 6.3.4. the terms of any agreements entered into with the suppliers do not have the effect of fettering the discretion of any successor administration, considering in particular the London elections taking place in May 2021.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Issue tender documents	25 January 2021
Supplier response deadline	3 February 2021
Assessment	4 February 2021
Announcement	05 February 2021
Delivery Start Date	12 February 2021
Delivery End Date	28 May 2021
Project Closure	31 May 2021

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? YES

If YES, for what reason: Deferred until completion of the procurement process in order to ensure best value.

Until what date: (a date is required if deferring) 31 March 2021

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:

Tom Jackson has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Assistant Director/Head of Service:

David Munn 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

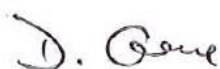
This decision was agreed by the Corporate Investment Board on 18 January 2021.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES:

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

Signature

Date



18 January 2021