

Request for Greater London Returning Officer (GLRO) Decision – GLRO16-27

Title: Provision of catering for London Elects e-counting training events

Executive summary

The Mayor of London and London Assembly elections will take place on Thursday 5th May 2016. Training events for all operators of the e-counting equipment took place at Lampton Park Conference Centre, Hounslow between 1 February and 18 March 2016. A decision is required to secure funding for additional catering for these training events.

Decision

That the GLRO approves:

- Additional expenditure of **£10,308**, making a total of £20,856, to be paid to the London Borough of Hounslow to provide catering for the e-counting training events at their Conference Centre in Lampton Park.

Greater London Returning Officer

The above request has my approval.

Signature



Date

15/04/16.

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 The elections for the Mayor of London and the London Assembly will take place in May 2016. The contract for e-counting that was in place for the 2012 elections has been extended for these elections. Training for all the e-counting staff from the constituencies took place between 1 February and 18 March 2016 at Lampton Park Conference Centre, Hounslow. This was approved through GLRO16-13 and the catering for the training was approved at a cost £10,548 via GLRO16-14.
- 1.2 The training sessions were full day events. Under the terms of agreement for use of the venue it was required that any catering must be provided in-house by the London Borough of Hounslow catering team.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1 The original order for catering consisted of a sandwich finger buffet, teas and coffees. The breakdown of costs was as follows:

Training days x 14 (@ £709 per day) = £9,932
Training staff x 35 (@ £8 per head) = £280
GLA staff (3 per day) x 14 days (@£8 per head) = £336
Total: **£10,548**

- 2.2 During the course of the training programme it became apparent that additional catering was required both in terms of the supply on tea/coffee during the morning break in the training and the numbers of staff that Constituency Returning Officers wanted to attend the training sessions. As a result the total cost of the catering increased and the final amounts supplied were as follows:

Date	Number Catered For	Net charge to GLA
01.02.16	-	-
02.02.16	-	-
03.02.16	-	-
04.02.16	32	£117
05.02.16	22	£81
Weekend		
08.02.16	32	£117
09.02.16	36	£411
10.02.16	116	£1,226
11.02.16	116	£1,226
12.02.16	116	£1,468

Half term		
22.02.16	107	£1,363
23.02.16	106	£1,341
24.02.16	109	£1,411
25.02.16	115	£1,487
26.02.16	116	£1,500
Weekend/Not in use		
02.03.16	-	-
03.03.16	110	£1,488
04.03.16	105	£1,425
Weekend		
07.03.16	105	£1,425
08.03.16	113	£1,537
09.03.16	120	£1,621
10.03.16	110	£1,488
11.03.16	-	-
Weekend		
14.03.16	-	-
15.03.16	25	£124
16.03.16	-	-
17.03.16	-	-
18.03.16	-	-
		£20,856

This represents an additional cost of £10,308 over the amount approved in GLRO16-14.

3. Other considerations

- 3.1 The training of the e-counting staff from the constituencies is key to the successful delivery of the 2016 elections. Without training the staff will be unable to operate the equipment and so will not be able to deliver the results. In order to ensure that the time available for training is utilised to the maximum effect, timetabled meal breaks will need to be facilitated efficiently. Access to the training venue has been negotiated for set hours per day. Provision of on-site catering will reduce the risk of training sessions over-running their allocated timeslots. Under the terms of agreement for use of the venue it is required that any catering should be provided in-house by the London Borough of Hounslow's in-house catering team

4. Equality comments

- 4.1 Discussions have taken place with the provider to ensure that specific dietary requirements can be accommodated. It should be noted that the provider is unable to ensure that meat products

prepared will adhere to specific religious requirements (kosher/halal). Vegetarian options will be provided.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1 The request for expenditure to provide catering for the two weeks of E-Counting training is for a total value of £20,856 with this decision form seeking approval for £10,308 of that £20,856. The budget for this cost is currently held in the Elections Training programme budget line within the Elections cost centre.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1 By section 29 Greater London Authority Act 1999 the Greater London Returning Officer ("GLRO") is the person appointed as the proper officer for the purposes of section 35(2C) Representation of the People Act 1983 ("RotPA") (returning officer at elections of Mayor and London members). The Mayor and Assembly have appointed the Head of Paid Service the GLRO as part of his terms and conditions of employment.
- 6.2 The GLRO is the returning officer for the Mayoral and London Member elections, and constituency returning officers are the returning officers for the election of a Constituency Member of the Assembly. The Authority must, under section 36(4B) of RotPA, pay for all expenditure properly incurred by a returning officer in relation to the holding of an Authority election, in so far as it does not, in cases where there is a scale fixed by the Authority, exceed that scale.
- 6.3 The Authority's Scheme of Delegation enables the GLRO to incur expenditure for the purposes of the preparation or conduct of any anticipated election as he considers necessary or expedient for that purpose. He is also able to authorise entry into contracts, licences or other instruments, in connection with an anticipated election in accordance with the Authority's Contracts and Funding Code and Financial Regulations.
- 6.4 Officers should ensure that appropriate documentation is put in place and executed by the Authority and the supplier before the commencement of the services.

Public access to information

Although the GLRO is not subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI Act), the information in this form will be published 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 will be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods will 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 whose publication may be prejudicial or commercially sensitive 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: <u>Lucy Brant</u> has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms that the <u>Finance and Legal</u> teams have commented on this proposal as required, and this decision reflects their comments.	✓
The Deputy GLRO has reviewed the request and is satisfied that it is correct and can be referred to the GLRO for approval	✓

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES:

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

Signature

M. J. Allcock

Date

15.4.16

