

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2385

Title: EU Londoners Hub and capacity building

Executive Summary:

The Social Integration Team is seeking approval to spend £40,000 to support European Londoners to access information and advice about their rights post-Brexit, and to build capacity in the sector. This work covers the following areas:

- capacity building of the sector working with European Londoners; and
- online campaign signposting to available free support on the Good Thinking digital platform.

Decision:

That the Assistant Director of Communities and Social Policy approves:

Expenditure of £40,000 in financial year 2019/20 to build capacity in the sector working with European Londoners and to provide resources supporting the wellbeing of European Londoners affected by the uncertainties of Brexit.

AUTHORISING DIRECTOR

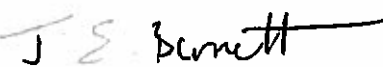
I have reviewed the request and am satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.

It has my approval.

Name: Jeanette Bain-Burnett

Position: Assistant Director for
Communities & Social Policy

Signature:



Date: 31/10/2019

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 More than one million EU citizens live in London. To remain in the UK after Brexit, the Government has stated they will need to apply for 'settled status' under the EU Settlement Scheme. According to Home Office statistics, over 340,000 applications had been made in London by September 2019 – with the highest numbers of applications in Brent, Newham, and Ealing. This is broadly proportionate to local European Economic Area (EEA) plus Swiss populations.
- 1.2 There is still significant uncertainty over European Londoners future status in the UK¹ which has contributed to immediate challenges including feeling unwelcome, discrimination, hate crime, problems accessing credit and mortgages, difficulties renting private property, problems gaining employment, discriminatory treatment stemming from confusion about entitlements to services, and resulting mental health problems.
- 1.3 Some European Londoners face additional barriers to obtaining their correct status under the EU Settlement Scheme². These include people
- not hearing about the scheme or realising that it applies to them;
 - struggling to provide evidence of residency or finding the system too hard to navigate;
 - encountering technical difficulties if the system cannot match names and official records;
 - unable to access the system due to language barriers, disability or lack of administrative or digital capacity; and
 - incorrectly being granted pre-settled status instead of settled status not knowing how to challenge the decision.
- 1.4 Despite the Home Office's £9m community fund, there is still a shortage of quality advice and support available. Existing services are under extreme pressure given the scale of the challenge. Home Office grantees are required to deliver their outreach services by March 2020 but have voiced concern that they have not been given adequate support and training to do so. The removal of legal aid from immigration and family reunification cases has further stretched what advice and support is freely accessible. This adds to the stress (and potentially to the costs) facing even those European nationals with a straightforward claim for status.
- 1.5 In March 2019, the Mayor launched the EU Londoners Hub on London.gov.uk to make it easier for European Londoners to get the information they need to stay in the UK after Brexit. DD2239 approved the initial £90k funding and DD2277 approved the remaining £110k to further build on the work. The3Million and Here for Good programmes continue to deliver content for the portal, 15 micro-grants have been awarded with a total of £50k to reach the most marginalised groups, and a #LondonIsOpen roadshow toured 10 boroughs over four days raising awareness of the Settlement Scheme, providing pro bono immigration advice to hundreds of European Londoners.
- 1.6 In September 2019, the Mayor opened the doors to City Hall for an all-day festival celebrating European cultures and communities. The event was attended by 5,000 Europeans and in partnership with Here for Good's pro bono lawyer network, over 500 Europeans received free 1-2-1 advice on the EU Settlement Scheme and their situation. The following groups are identified as being most at risk

¹ <https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/reports/unsettled-status-which-eu-citizens-are-at-risk-of-failing-to-secure-their-rights-after-brexit/>

² <http://www.eerc.org.uk/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/EUSS-and-vulnerable-East-Europeans-lessons-learned.pdf>

of marginalisation because they are most likely to be affected by the additional barriers outlined in 1.3 above:

- those with limited English language proficiency, literacy or administrative confidence;
- children and young people, especially those in care or those who are separated from their family;
- people with disabilities (physical and learning);
- people with mental health issues;
- older people;
- carers;
- Roma EEA+ nationals;
- EEA+ nationals in the LGBT community;
- non-EEA family members of EEA nationals;
- those with retained and derived rights, including third-country nationals relying on EU law rights based on CJEU jurisprudence, such as Zambrano carers;
- EEA+ nationals in detention centres and facing removal;
- EEA+ nationals living in houses in multiple occupation;
- EEA+ nationals in precarious work and those who have fallen out of work;
- EEA+ nationals who are homeless;
- EEA+ nationals who are victims of modern slavery and trafficking;
- EEA+ nationals who are victims of domestic abuse;
- EEA+ nationals who have made unsuccessful applications for permanent residence;
- EEA+ nationals with limited life skills: no or poor English, illiteracy, innumeracy, no or poor social networks, low educational attainment; and
- EEA+ nationals disadvantaged by virtue of isolation: living and working in anti-social conditions, working anti-social hours, living in isolation (e.g. institutions, care homes, safe houses etc).

- 1.7 There is work underway in the Communities and Social Policy unit to develop a portal similar to the EU Londoners Hub for all Londoners to access information and advice on employment rights. Another project focused on addressing the extreme shortage of advice in relation to immigration cases is also underway. Officers and web designers will ensure these projects align and deliver a joined-up experience for users where relevant.
- 1.8 The EU Settlement Scheme opened earlier this year and Europeans have until December 2020 to apply in a No-Deal scenario. We know that no scheme such as this has ever achieved 100% registration. Even if it gets to 90% that means hundreds of thousands of people will overnight go from being legal residents to undocumented migrants - unable to work, rent somewhere to live, access free healthcare, open a bank account, attend university, and drive.
- 1.9 The Mayor is committed to supporting European Londoners in securing their status and ensuring they feel like they belong in the capital. The total budget for our work with European communities until April 2020 would be £130,000, which includes £40k for outreach activities through microgrants as agreed through MD2461 and £50,000 carry-forward from the expenditure agreed through DD2277. The carry-forward will go towards:
- £10k awareness raising;

- £15k further translations and coordination in partnership with the3million and Here for Good;
- £3k further development of the Hub;
- £10k microgrants to civil society and community organisations; and
- £12k committed spend on the3million.

1.10 The requested additional £40k will be allocated as follows:

- £20k capacity building; and
- £20k to mental wellbeing support in partnership with Good Thinking.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

2.1 Objectives:

- **To support capacity building of the sector working with European Londoners.** Having consulted with a number of organisations that have received initial OISC EUSS level 1 training they report feeling unprepared to provide good quality advice. We will put a tender out with the aim to commission an organisation with the demonstrable experience and expertise to deliver a training programme for organisations with an EUSS OISC level 1 qualification to further train them in giving advice. These organisations include Home Office-funded community groups and other organisations that have recently entered the advice-space supporting European who need to apply under the EU Settlement Scheme. This will form part of the wider project around Insecure Status and advice provision to Londoners which the Social Integration team is currently developing.
- **To address European Londoners' mental wellbeing by developing online campaign and signpost to emotional support services.** Funds will also go towards testing ads for a social media campaign to target affected communities and direct them to Good Thinking – an online platform that brings resources for information and support on mental health and wellbeing together and which is the only organisation that offers mental health digital support service specifically for Londoners with an ability to tailor work to particular cohorts.

2.2 Expected Outcomes:

- Capacity building of the sector working with European Londoners through a training programme for 450 advisers funded by microgrants and/or the Home Office community fund to ensure high quality advice.
- Development of an online campaign signposting to available free support on the Good Thinking digital platform. The impact of Brexit on Europeans' wellbeing and mental health addressed, supported and better understood. Steps taken to reduce anxiety and build resilience.
- Strong messages of welcome and belonging that mitigate the risks that European Londoners will face discrimination or prolonged uncertainty about their rights post-Brexit.

Activity	Budget
Capacity building of the sector	
• EUSS training for advisors	£20k
Mental wellbeing support	
• Online research for ad campaign + testing	£10k
• Social media campaign signposting to Good Thinking	£10k
Total	£40,000

3. Equality comments

- 3.1 Under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, as a public authority, the GLA must have 'due regard' of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), that is the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
 - Advance equality of opportunity; and
 - Foster good relations between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 3.2 Equality, integration and inclusion are the drivers behind this programme. This work to further develop a portal directing European Londoners to information and support aims to reduce uncertainty and discrimination facing vulnerable migrant groups, challenges such as feeling unwelcome, discrimination, hate crime, problems accessing credit and mortgages, difficulties renting private property, problems gaining employment, discriminatory treatment stemming from confusion about entitlements to services, and resulting mental health problems all of which was highlighted in an impact assessment report.
- 3.3 It will also seek to empower and support over one million European Londoners to access their right to remain after the UK leaves the European Union.
- 3.4 Any commissioning processes will ask potential partners to demonstrate how their projects are inclusive of a diverse group and actively work to eliminate discrimination on the basis of the nine characteristics protected in the Equality Act 2010. In order to ensure the highest standards of equality, diversity and inclusion are upheld, the GLA will use outreach and engagement approaches to target activities at particular groups that are less able to engage or face greater barriers to engagement to enable them to participate, whilst ensuring that activities are open and accessible to all Londoners.
- 3.5 The guidance and resources are produced in accordance with best practice for accessible communications. This decision will provide additional funding to further improve accessibility into different European languages, for digitally-excluded groups, for users with low reading comprehension, and further direct outreach to vulnerable groups.

4. Other considerations

Key risks and issues

Risk	Mitigation measures	Current probability (1-4)	Current impact (1-4)	RAG	GLA Lead
Information and sign-posting information could become outdated	Commissioned partners are responsible for	2	4	A	Social Integration Team

	keeping resources up-to-date and ongoing resource for maintenance will be assigned to the project for this purpose.				
Organisations commissioned and funded to carry out work fail to deliver to expected quality or to time.	Set clear and specific parameters for delivery; build in regular milestones to check progress; work with trusted partners where possible.	2	2	G	Social Integration Team

- 4.1. There are no conflicts of interest to note for any of those involved in the drafting or clearance of the decision.

Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

- 4.2 This work forms part of the Mayor's social integration strategy All of Us, to remove barriers to integration relating to ability to access legal rights to citizenship and residence.

Impact assessments and consultations.

- 4.3 In July 2017, the London Assembly EU Exit Working Group hosted a session entitled 'European Voices: EU Londoners Speak' together with civil society organisation New Europeans and in November 2017, the Social Integration team hosted a roundtable with civil society and representatives from the legal sector to explore in more depth, the issue of EEA+ and third-country nationals at risk of marginalisation post-Brexit.
- 4.4 In March 2018, the London Strategic Migration Partnership invited the Immigration Law Practitioners' Association (ILPA) to discuss the concerns of the legal sector in relation to citizens' rights post-Brexit. The EU Londoners Hub has been designed in consultation with the advice and community support sectors, and user tested by European Londoners and community organisations.
- 4.5 The Social Integration team has worked closely with civil society, local authorities, the Home Office and the European Commission over the last couple of years. We are members of the European Commissions' Monitoring Network which is convened regularly. We also attend the Home Office's roundtables that they convene together with local authorities and grantees of the community fund.
- 4.6 Through the Citizenship and Integration Initiative (CII) we are in close contact with civil society organisations that work with EU citizens and their rights.
- 4.7 This decision request builds on the feedback from partners³ and research to support capacity building in the sector, as well as European Londoners themselves.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1 Approval is being sought for expenditure of £40,000 towards supporting the EU Londoners Hub and building capacity within the sector working with European Londoners.

³ Here for Good, New Europeans, East European Resource Centre, Roma Support Group, the European Commission UK Representation, the AIRE Centre, The Children's Society and others

- 5.2 This expenditure will be contained within the 2019/20 European Londoners programme budget, held within Communities and Social Policy unit.

6. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Develop campaign to signpost Europeans to online resources to address mental wellbeing needs	December 2019
Launch advice training for OISC EUSS level 1 regulated organisations	January 2020

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? NO

If YES, for what reason:

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

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:

Bella Kosmala has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Corporate Investment Board

This decision was agreed by the Corporate Investment Board on 28 October 2019.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE:

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

Signature



Date

28.10.19