

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2449

Title: Rapid Evidence Review: Inequalities in relation to COVID-19 and their effects on London

Executive Summary:

The COVID-19 pandemic is the most significant public health crisis in living memory. The economic, health and social challenges arising from both the virus itself, and from the lockdown are far-reaching. Recovery will take many months, if not years. Having data about Londoners will be crucial to informing the recovery effort

The GLA would like to commission an organisation or consultant to conduct a rapid evidence review on the impact of COVID-19 on the full range of protected groups and socio-economic inequality, with particular regard to its effect in London and the disproportionate impact on different groups. The impacts will cover social, economic and health outcomes.

This work will help shape and deliver London's recovery and renewal from the pandemic by highlighting social and economic inequalities that have driven differences in the impact of coronavirus across London's communities and the inequalities created as a result of this crisis.

Decision:

That the Assistant Director of Communities and Social Policy approves:

Expenditure of £25,000 in financial year 2020/21 to commission an organisation to conduct a rapid evidence review around the impact of COVID-19 on different groups of Londoners.

AUTHORISING ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/HEAD OF UNIT

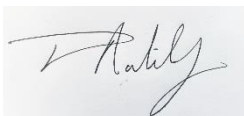
I have reviewed the request and am satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.

It has my approval.

Name: Tom Rahilly

Position: Assistant Director,
Communities and Social Policy

Signature:



Date:

27 May 2020

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. The COVID-19 pandemic is the most significant public health crisis in living memory. The economic, health and social challenges arising from both the virus itself, and from the lockdown are far-reaching. Recovery will take many months, if not years. Having data about Londoners will be crucial to informing the recovery effort. Data will be collated from a wide range of sources to provide a holistic overview of the socio-economic state of London, which will support public policy decision-making.
- 1.2. There has already been significant reporting of the disproportionate impact of COVID-19, particularly in relation to deaths and severe cases, among Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups in the UK. Recent modelling work from the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS), Office for National Statistics (ONS) and Oxford University has confirmed the extent of the disparities which cannot be explained by available measures of health and social inequalities. Further analysis is required to understand issues such as occupational exposure to COVID-19 and how these intersect with other characteristics such as housing and household characteristics. Public Health England (PHE) is now conducting a national review of COVID-19 and its impact on BAME communities.
- 1.3. The Mayor of London and GLA will work with PHE as far as possible on this review but are keen to understand the unique situation in London and the likely further impact of an economic downturn on existing inequalities to develop its own response.
- 1.4. In 2018 the Mayor published Inclusive London, his equality, diversity and inclusion strategy for London. His vision was for everyone in London to “be able to share in its prosperity, culture and community life regardless of their age, social class, disability, race, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, or whether they are pregnant or on maternity leave.”
- 1.5. In the same year he also published his Health Inequalities Strategy. The strategy highlighted how London remains deeply divided, with too many Londoners suffering ill health because of social and economic exclusion. One of the key messages was that health is part of a wider picture: a fairer economy, a stronger and more integrated society and an environment that helps people stay fit and healthy contributes to wellbeing, health outcomes and prosperity. By making sure that health is considered in all of the Mayor’s strategies – from food, to housing, to economic development, to transport – he aims to create a city where no one’s health suffers because of who they are, or where they live or work.
- 1.6. This sets the scene for this new piece of work. COVID-19 has already begun to highlight stark social, economic and environmental impacts that will contribute to health inequalities. These impacts are not experienced equally, and we already have evidence of the disproportionate burden on men, older people, and some BAME communities. The Mayor and the GLA would like to understand this in more detail, as well as the impact the pandemic is having on Londoners of other characteristics and with multiple characteristics that may make them more at risk of infection, hospitalisation or poor prognosis including death.
- 1.7. London is demographically different from the rest of the country. For example, Londoners are younger on average, but with a growing older population. A larger proportion of Londoners are migrants, people in London are most likely to identify as LGBT+, and Londoners are twice as likely to identify as being of a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME) background compared with the rest of England and Wales.
- 1.8. London also stands alone as the largest urban area in the country, with a population size much greater than the next big city region (Birmingham). Its population growth has been driven strongly by migration, with significant inflows and outflows reflecting a high level of transience. London’s size brings its own unique challenges in relation to Londoners’ travel patterns and living conditions. Air

quality is poorer, Londoners have less access to a private or shared garden and overcrowding is more prevalent. London's higher housing costs lead to a much higher rate of poverty than the rest of the country once these are taken into account.

- 1.9. This work will complement national work being led by PHE's project to better understand how different characteristics could impact on how people's health outcomes are affected by COVID-19 across the clinical pathway. The London review will include a wider range of protected characteristics rather than gender and ethnicity, as well as social and economic inequalities, and will focus on the specific London context as a major city. This work will help shape and deliver London's recovery and renewal from the pandemic by highlighting social and economic inequalities that have driven differences in the impact of coronavirus across London's communities and the inequalities created as a result of this crisis,
- 1.10. The requested £25,000 will be used to commission an organisation to conduct a rapid evidence review around the impact of COVID-19 on different groups of Londoners.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1. To understand and document the impact of COVID-19 on the full range of protected groups, as well as socio-economic characteristics, with particular regard to its effect in London. As well as the initial impact of experience of COVID-19 as a disease the review will look at likely further impacts of the resulting economic downturn which may exacerbate existing inequalities in terms of the labour market, education, health, access to food etc.

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, diversity and inclusion are the drivers behind this research. The work to understand the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the full range of protected groups and socio-economic inequality expands upon the national government's work which has a primary focus on ethnic background.
- 3.3. Understanding the experiences of more groups of Londoners will help the GLA shape the development of policy going forward to increase fairness and ensure that equality impacts are considered as critical decisions are made.

4. Other considerations

Key risks and issues

Risk	Mitigation measures	Current probability (1: low-4: high)	Current impact (1: low-4: high)	RAG
No bidders for the work	Expand list of candidates to bid	2	4	Amber

after ITT is issued	for work; lengthen project timeline			
Organisation commissioned 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	2	3	Green

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

Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

- 4.2. This work ties in with the Mayor's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy and Health Inequalities Strategy. Both of these strategies themselves tie in with many, if not all, of the Mayor's other statutory and non-statutory strategies.

Consultations and impact assessments

- 4.3. This decision request builds on feedback from policy colleagues, the Mayor's Office and external stakeholders to carry out analytical work to explore the issue of disproportional impacts of COVID-19, which should be considered in conjunction with a parallel workstream to develop policy responses to these impacts.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1. Approval is being sought for expenditure of £25,000 towards commissioning an organisation to conduct a rapid evidence review around the impact of COVID-19 on different groups of Londoners.
- 5.2. This expenditure will be funded by the 2020/21 Social Evidence Base Budget, within the Communities and Social Policy Unit.

6. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Procurement of contract	From 15 May 2020
Contract awarded	27 May 2020
Delivery Start Date	27 May 2020
Delivery End Date	11 August 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:

Barry Fong has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures.

✓

Corporate Investment Board

This decision was agreed by the Corporate Investment Board on 26 May 2020.

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

26 May 2020