

**REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD189**

**Title: Social media software**

**Executive Summary:**

In March 2014, the GLA launched a new social media strategy and now has a suite of official channels. Channel managers have been assigned to run the channels and it is crucial that they work collaboratively to ensure they are responsive and helpful to Londoners. The GLA is using social media software Sprout Social and Radian6 to assist with collaborative working and reporting. Sprout Social enables publishing of content, monitoring of GLA interactions and posts and management of GLA channels on a single user-interface. Radian6 is for social media listening, which enables effective reporting and subsequent learnings. This helps ensure the GLA delivers a good service to Londoners on social media.

**Decision:**

The Assistant Director of External Relations to approve:

1. Expenditure of up to £14,000 until 31 March 2015 on social media software, Sprout Social, to ensure effective management of the GLA's new suite of official social media channels.
2. Expenditure of up to £26,000 until June 2016 on social media listening software, Radian6, to ensure effective reporting on the GLA's social media activity so continuous improvements can be made.

**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:** Emma Strain

**Position:** Assistant Director of External Relations

**Signature:**

**Date:** 30 April 2014

## **PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE**

### **Decision required – supporting report**

#### **1. Introduction and background**

- 1.1 The GLA introduced a new social media strategy in March 2014 – ‘Fewer + Bigger = Better’, which involved rationalising channels into a streamlined suite and focussing resources in order to improve how the GLA engages with Londoners via social media. The GLA’s new suite of channels are on platforms including Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Google+ and LinkedIn.
- 1.2 Channel managers have been assigned to run the channels and the channels cross promote each other’s content as appropriate to ensure it reaches a large and interested audience. It is vital that channel managers work collaboratively to ensure they can respond to comments/questions from Londoners promptly. It is also important for findings to be shared, for example types of content that Londoners enjoy, messages that resonate, etc. so that the GLA’s social media offering can constantly evolve and improve for Londoners.
- 1.3 In order to ensure effective management of the suite of channels, the GLA’s new strategy included use of social media tools to ensure the GLA could publish content, monitor interactions, manage feedback and respond and listen to Londoners using social media.
- 1.4 The GLA ran a competitive tender with four companies to discuss how their software could meet these needs. Sprout Social was identified as an intuitive system that enables channel managers to publish content, monitor GLA interactions and posts and manage GLA channels on a single user-interface. Radian6 was identified as a comprehensive listening tool, which will enable the GLA to report on its social media activities, learn what type of content is useful for Londoners and therefore what the GLA should do more of.
- 1.5 The GLA has been using Sprout Social on a month’s free trial and is very pleased with the platform. GLA channel managers have embraced the software and it is successfully delivering on the GLA’s requirements. As such, the GLA would like to continue using Sprout Social until March 2015, when we will review our social media tool requirements again.
- 1.6 The GLA will work with Radian6 to get the system set up as soon as possible. Radian6 will also provide training as part of the agreement.

#### **2. Objectives and expected outcomes**

- 2.1 The objective of using Sprout Social is to allow the GLA channel managers to publish content, monitor GLA interactions and posts and manage GLA channels on a single user-interface. Channel managers are organisation-wide and Sprout Social enables collaborative working when colleagues do not have face-to-face contact on a daily basis.
- 2.2 The objective of using Radian6 is to provide the GLA with a comprehensive social media listening and reporting tool. It will allow the GLA to monitor the broader conversation on social media so we can engage as appropriate. It will enable the GLA to continuously learn what Londoners want from the GLA’s official channels and therefore improve our social media presence on an ongoing basis.

#### **3. Other considerations**

- a) Key risks and issues

The success of the GLA's new social media strategy relies on collaborative working, prompt and helpful responses to Londoners and compelling and engaging content. The risk of not employing Sprout Social and Radian6 as tools is that GLA staff work in silos and the GLA's output via social media cannot be properly monitored and therefore improved.

b) Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

External Affairs' priorities in the GLA business plan 2013/14 to 2015/16 include:

- o Prepare an integrated marketing strategy, increasing both the efficiency and impact of communication with Londoners (p45)

In addition, the use of Sprout Social and Radian6 will ensure resources are used efficiently and the GLA demonstrates value for money for Londoners.

c) Impact assessments and consultations

Feedback from the GLA social media channel managers is that Sprout Social is a useful tool and this is evidenced by the fact it has been embraced across the organisation. The GLA is continuing its use of Sprout Social following a successful month's free trial.

The social media strategy has been introduced in consultation with GLA staff. Radian6 will be used predominantly by the Marketing team and will replace an existing tool. Training will be provided to the Marketing team as part of the agreement and training will be organised for other GLA employees if needed.

#### **4. Financial comments**

- 4.1 Approval is being sought for expenditure of up to £14,000 on Sprout Social, social media software to effectively manage the GLA's new suite of official social media channels to 31 March 2015 and up to £26,000 to June 2016 on Radian 6, social media listening software to ensure effective monitoring and reporting on the GLA's social media activity.
- 4.2 Costs in 2014-15 are to be met from the 2014-15 E-Marketing budget held within External Relations Unit (External Affairs directorate). Costs for Radian6 in 2015-16 are to make first call on the 2015-16 Marketing Team budget, External Relations Unit (External Affairs directorate). Final budgets for 2015-16 are subject to the annual budget process and approval.
- 4.3 All appropriate budget adjustments will be made.
- 4.4 Any changes to this proposal including budgetary implications will be subject to further approval via the Authority's decision making process.
- 4.5 The Marketing Team within the External Relations Unit (External Affairs directorate) will be responsible for managing these contracts and ensuring compliance with the Authority's Financial Regulations and Contracts and Funding code where applicable.

#### **5. Planned delivery approach and next steps**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Procurement of contract	n/a
Announcement	n/a
Delivery Start Date	April 2014
Final evaluation start and finish (self)	March 2015
Delivery End Date	March 2015
Project Closure:	June 2016

**Appendices and supporting papers:**

None

**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:**

Kelly McMorran Barnard has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms that the Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal as required, and this decision reflects their comments.

✓

**HEAD OF GOVERNANCE AND RESILIENCE:**

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

**Signature:**

**Date:**