

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR MAYORAL DECISION – MD1548

Title: Launch and ongoing development and refinement of new London.gov.uk

Executive Summary:

The GLA has a requirement to communicate with Londoners about the work of the Mayor, the London Assembly and staff at City Hall, and to engage them in its work so they can access the benefits. As part of this work, we are redeveloping the London.gov.uk website. Based on intelligence and audience insights and feedback, the redevelopment of London.gov.uk aims to:

- Be the first place to go for information about London government
- Be a modern, open and engaging site that listens to people's concerns
- Help Londoners get involved and improve their city
- Help professionals to connect, share ideas and learn from each other

Following a soft launch of the new website to key stakeholders and the digital/tech industry in July 2015, a larger, more long-term project is required to promote the new site to Londoners and to support ongoing developments and refinements. The ongoing project will comprise of:

- A marketing communications campaign to increase site usage and to invite user feedback during public beta in January 2016
- Ongoing development and refinement work to ensure user feedback from public beta is addressed

Decision:

That the Mayor approves:

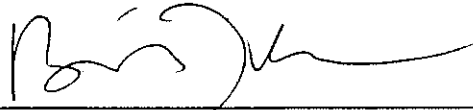
- Expenditure of up to £126,000 on a digital marketing communications campaign to increase site usage and to invite user feedback during public beta from January 2016
- Expenditure of up to £66,000 to support further development and refinement work to ensure user feedback from public beta is addressed

Mayor of London

I confirm that I do not have any disclosable pecuniary interests in the proposed decision, and take the decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct for elected Members of the Authority.

The above request has my approval.

Signature:



Date:

21.9.2015

PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE TO THE MAYOR

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

LGRedev – Launch and ongoing development and refinement of new London.gov.uk

- 1.1 In the summer of 2013 consumer research was commissioned by City Hall. The objectives were to investigate awareness and understanding about the role of City Hall, the Mayor and the London Assembly; and the needs and interests of Londoners.
- 1.2 Research found that Londoners care strongly about their area/their London/their community; have limited awareness and understanding about City Hall and its role; and even lower understanding of the governance of London.
- 1.3 There is general misunderstanding about where and how the Mayor and City Hall fit in relation to London Councils and Central Government.
- 1.4 Despite these challenges, opportunities for City Hall were identified, as research also found that Londoners are passionate about London; resonate with some of the Mayor and City Hall's work; and have an appetite to know (and feel like they ought to know) and engage more.
- 1.5 In addition, a website satisfaction survey conducted in 2015 showed that a low proportion of Londoners currently use London.gov.uk (22% per month). It also showed that, despite passion and desire to know more and to get involved, visitors do not currently come to the site to find out what the Mayor/London Assembly are doing for London as a whole (6%) or to find out what they're doing in their local area (4%).
- 1.6 Based on all the evidence, a marketing communications strategy was developed in 2013 and implemented to address concerns raised by Londoners and to capitalise on the opportunities identified through research. The work-streams that make-up the strategy include the City Hall education leaflet, an upcoming City Hall education film, a new suite of social media channels, a new email marketing system, the Mayor of London Events strategy and the redevelopment of London.gov.uk.
- 1.7 The redevelopment of London.gov.uk (approved via MD1326 and MD1414) to deliver a new and improved website for Londoners started in 2013 and is an integral part of the marketing communications strategy. Following a soft launch of the new website to key stakeholders and the digital/tech industry in July 2015, a larger, more long-term project is required to promote the new site to Londoners and to support ongoing development and refinements. The ongoing project will comprise of:
 - Expenditure of up to £126,000 on a digital marketing communications campaign to increase site usage and to invite user feedback during public beta in January 2016
 - Expenditure of £66,000 to fund further development work to ensure user feedback during public beta is addressed
- 1.8 Expenditure of up to £126,000 on a digital marketing communications campaign is broken down as follows:
 - Research – £20,000
 - Media planning and buying – £70,000
 - Content – £20,000

- Email marketing - £500
- Contingency - £15,500

1.9 Expenditure of up to £66,000 will fund a further 5 weeks of development time which will be enable further development on key outstanding elements of the website including 'In my area' functionality, search integration and the integration of webcasts onto the site. It will also enable us to address feedback from users to the public beta.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

2.1 The GLA Marketing, Design and Web teams in External Relations will be responsible for planning and delivering the ongoing project work-streams in close collaboration with the Technology Group.

2.2 GLA Marketing will plan and deliver a digital communications campaign to promote the new site to Londoners and invite further thoughts and feedback for ongoing site refinement. As part of every marketing strategy delivered for the GLA, Marketing will investigate the best route to communicate with Londoners, through the most effective and accessible channels in the most engaging way. Marketing will maximise use of 'owned' and 'earned' channels while commissioning paid or 'bought' media through MEC, a contracted media planning & buying agency, used also by TfL. The GLA and TfL sharing the same supplier enables economies of scale and a joined up approach to marketing plan delivery, reducing the potential for conflicting campaigns being in place at the same time. GLA Marketing will also work with MEC to identify and agree realistic KPIs for site traffic based on a suitable investment level and the target audience population/size.

2.3 Digital channels will be selected based on their ability to both reach the campaign's target audience and meet set KPIs. A final media plan and KPIs will be scoped following brief and consultation with MEC, the GLA's media planning and buying agency. Campaign approaches and ideas include:

- Two phased approach including announcement and awareness
- Phase one (announcement) highlighting new features and raising awareness that the website has been launched, using channels such as online display, PPC and social media
- Phase two (awareness) building on peaked interest and aiming to increase awareness amongst the target audience at a time when information is most relevant to them, using channels such as social media (interest targeting), online display (behavioural, contextual and/or retargeting) and press partnerships

2.4 The objectives for this campaign are to drive traffic to London.gov.uk (primary) in order to raise awareness of London.gov.uk as the first place to go for information about the work of the Mayor of London and London Assembly (secondary). These objectives are directly related to the GLA's business objective of raising awareness, comprehension and ownership of the work we do at City Hall amongst Londoners. While KPIs need to be scoped in relation to budget, they are currently set as follows:

- Hard metrics: Increase weekly traffic to London.gov.uk by a minimum of 20%, retain or lower bounce rate on both mobile and desktop
- Soft metric: Track awareness amongst Londoners of London.gov.uk as a source of information on the work of the Mayor of London and London Assembly

3. Equality comments

3.1 The construction of all GLA marketing campaigns take into account the audience for which the campaign is targeted. In every case, the communication channels and materials are assessed to ensure they are fully accessible and in line with the public sector equality duty.

4. Other considerations

a) Risk

- 4.1 If this request is not approved, plans to promote the new website among Londoners and to support the ongoing development and refinement of the site will be withdrawn or significantly reduced. This could result in us not being able to meet the objectives and aims of the marketing communications and wider City Hall strategies and not implementing all the planned functional improvements.
- 4.2 The funding for the additional development work will supplement the current London.gov.uk project budget (known as LGRedev). There is a risk that there will still be insufficient funding to complete every aspect of the site, this will be monitored and managed as part of the ongoing LGRedev project.

b) Links to strategies and Mayoral and corporate priorities

- 4.3 The LGRedev project is a direct output of City Hall's marketing communications and digital strategies. Improving London.gov.uk is one of the core activities GLA External Relations is running to achieve our objectives and aims to; increase public awareness, understanding and engagement with the work that the Mayor, the London Assembly and the staff at City Hall do.
- 4.4 Using the services of MEC, a media planning & buying agency, and other specialist marketing communication suppliers will allow the GLA to communicate the work of the Mayor and how Londoners can access the benefits, allowing us to 'ensure that London's strengths are promoted effectively' (Strategic Plan). Further to that we will be working with MEC to ensure all digital channels are explored and used in our communications planning, therefore 'riding the wave of digital engagement.'
- 4.5 Using specialist suppliers will ensure that our marketing approach, channel strategies and target audience mapping are effective and efficient, so that we are delivering value for Londoners, assisting London government to deliver better value from every pound they get from London's taxpayers to help deliver our goals.

c) Impact assessments and Consultation

- 4.6 Assessment and a recommendation has been made on spend thresholds based on previous work and experiences of the External Relations team, and will be tracked and monitored accordingly.
- 4.7 Specialist agencies will be evaluated through campaign report assessment, post campaign questionnaires (where appropriate) and adherence to the service level agreement.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1 The expenditure of up to £192,000 on the ongoing work by the External Relations team to support LGRedev will be funded from the existing 2015/16 website campaign budget.
- 5.2 The External Relations team within the External Affairs Directorate will continue to be responsible for managing the budget and supplier contracts for the marketing campaign, ensuring compliance with the Authority's Financial Regulations and Contracts and Funding Code. No spend will be invested or made to suppliers (i.e. MEC) without formal approval by the Assistant Director of External Relations.
- 5.3 The Technology Group within the Resources Directorate, working closely with the External Relations Web team will be responsible for managing the budget and supplier contracts associated with the further development of the website ensuring compliance with the Authority's Financial Regulations

and Contracts and Funding Code. No spend will be invested or made to suppliers without formal approval by the Head of TG and the Assistant Director of External Relations.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1 Under section 30 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 (the 'Act') the mayor, acting on behalf of the GLA, is entitled to do anything that he considers will further the promotion, within Greater London, of economic development and wealth creation, social development and the improvement of the environment.
- 6.2 Furthermore, section 34 of the Act allows the GLA, acting by the mayor, to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the exercise of any functions of the GLA exercisable by the mayor. As set out in paragraph 4.2 above, the LGRedev programme aims to "increase public awareness, understanding and engagement with the work of the mayor, the London assembly and GLA staff. To this end, the approval of a £192,000 budget for the LGRedev programme including, inter alia, its marketing campaign may be viewed as being calculated to facilitate and conducive and incidental to all of GLA's various functions.
- 6.3 The officers should ensure that all procurements and grants of funding, which are made in pursuance of the LGRedev programme, comply with the requirements of the GLA's contracts and funding code.

7. Investment & Performance Board

This Approval has not been submitted to IPB since it is an update on MD1326, which the Mayor was content to be submitted for his sign off. It was however discussed in detail at budget prioritisation stage.

8. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Brief MEC	September 2015
First creative deadline	October 2015
Website public live date (TBC)	November 2015
Campaign live and press moment (TBC)	January 2016
Campaign complete (TBC)	March 2016

Appendices and supporting papers:

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:

Patora Dyrma has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following have been consulted on the final decision.

✓

Assistant Director:

Emma Strain has reviewed the documentation and is satisfied for it to be referred to the Sponsoring Director for approval.

✓

Sponsoring Director:

Will Walden has reviewed the request and is satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.

✓

Mayoral Adviser:

Will Walden has been consulted about the proposal and agrees the recommendations.

✓

Advice:

The Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal.

✓

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES:

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

Signature

M. J. Allen

Date

18.9.15

CHIEF OF STAFF:

I am satisfied that this is an appropriate request to be submitted to the Mayor

Signature

Edna H. -

Date

21.09.2015