

Request for Greater London Returning Officer (GLRO) Decision – GLRO 20-10

Title: London Elects marketing campaign for the Mayor of London and London Assembly elections 2020

Executive Summary:

This decision requests authorisation of expenditure to plan and deliver an integrated marketing communications campaign to tell the London electorate that Mayoral and London Assembly elections are taking place (awareness) and explain the voting process (knowledge).

Decision:

That the GLRO approves expenditure of up to £450,000 to plan and deliver an integrated marketing communications campaign to deliver two goals:

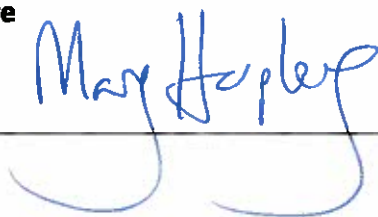
- To raise awareness among the London electorate that the Mayor of London and London Assembly Elections are taking place on 7 May 2020
- To explain the voting process among the London electorate, building understanding about how, when and where to vote.

The exact amount to be spent on the campaign is subject to the GLRO being satisfied with the campaign proposal to reach London voters.

Greater London Returning Officer

The above request has my approval.

Signature



Date

1 November 2019

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 Section 69 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006 (EAA) introduced a duty on Electoral Registration Officers and Returning Officers to “take such steps as s/he thinks appropriate to encourage the participation by electors in the electoral process in the area for which s/he acts”.
- 1.2 The GLRO has no responsibility in respect of electoral registration (this rests with Boroughs and the Electoral Commission) but will fulfil the duty above by providing the London electorate with information on when, where and how to vote and on the roles of the Mayor of London and London Assembly. This will be carried out in part by the Mayor of London and London Assembly marketing campaign.
- 1.3 The campaign will be planned and delivered to ensure balance, defined as reaching London voters across various populations, demographics and communities in a proportionate and cost effective way.
- 1.4 Balance will be achieved by selecting a media mix that reaches a base profile of London adults which does not favour any one group over any other. Owned GLA and TfL assets will be taken as a starting point and additional media purchased to ensure all groups are reached in broadly equal amounts.
- 1.5 We will work closely with our media planning and buying agency to confirm campaign media channels. Potential media channels include, but are not limited to, outdoor media including GLA poster assets (gifted from TfL), radio advertising, local press advertising, digital display advertising, social media (advertising and organic content) and search (pay-per-click) advertising.
- 1.6 Cost effectiveness will be achieved using in-house marketing and creative services, by maximising use of free GLA and TfL assets, and by working with local authorities and other relevant organisations to extend the reach of the campaign.
- 1.7 Campaign planning work is being done with the media planning and buying agency to ensure most of London’s electorate are reached via the campaign, in line with the reach delivered via the 2016 marketing campaign. The media and political landscapes have changed significantly in four years and therefore campaign costs have increased, not solely due to inflation, but also due to innovation in media and the increased requirement to achieve cut-through in a cluttered space.
- 1.8 The exact amount to be spent on the campaign is subject to the GLRO being satisfied with the campaign proposal to reach London voters.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1 The objectives of the campaign are as follows:
 - To raise awareness among the London electorate that the Mayor of London and London Assembly Elections are taking place on 7 May 2020
 - To explain the voting process among the London electorate, building understanding about how, when and where to vote, and the roles of the Mayor and Assembly.

- 2.2 Campaign key performance indicators will be set during the media planning process with metrics and stretch metrics.

3. Other considerations

3.1 Key risks and issues:

- **Unscheduled electoral events:** A general election or second EU referendum on or near to 7 May 2020 could lead to voter confusion due to multiple elections taking place and could diminish the cut through of the London Elects campaign. Possible mitigations will be considered when developing the campaign.
- **Working with boroughs:** In 2016 London Elects liaised directly with the London boroughs to identify additional low cost advertising opportunities through council publications, outdoor sites and distribution channels. Campaign artwork was produced for the boroughs to co-brand and use at their own expense. This proved a cost-effective way to broaden the reach of the London Elects marketing campaign and ensure borough and GLA activity was integrated.

This model will be followed in 2020 and the GLA will work in partnership with the boroughs to ensure we maximise the opportunities for boroughs to use the campaign materials.

However, each Electoral Registration Officer has a duty to promote electoral registration at local level and this will see local borough campaigns taking place to encourage registration within certain underrepresented groups. The GLA will work closely with the boroughs to ensure as far as possible that local campaigns complement the GLA campaign.

London Elects will also work closely with the London boroughs throughout the campaign development and delivery phases. Boroughs' desire to carry out local advertising (outside of register to vote activity) will be noted and the impact of local advertising will be considered in consultation with the media agency. The GLRO will be kept abreast of progress as part of our risk management. Clear guidelines will also be provided to boroughs including a process for signing off materials which use London Elects advertising creative and branding.

- **Reputation:** There is a reputational risk for London Elects in delivering a marketing campaign. It is essential that the campaign is perceived as being unbiased. All organisations and teams, such as the media agency and in-house creative team, will be fully briefed on this to ensure political impartiality. Creative testing and creative approval by the GLRO will also help to mitigate this.
- **Electoral Commission campaigns:** The Electoral Commission have a duty to encourage voter registration among the electorate. The Electoral Commission may run a national advertising campaign to raise awareness that people need to register to vote. If so, it is likely that the London Elects marketing campaign will be live at the same time. London Elects will work closely with the Electoral Commission to ensure as far as possible that the campaigns do not conflict and messaging for each is clear and distinct.

Campaign timings

- 3.2 We estimate that the marketing campaign will run for approximately eight weeks during the run up to polling day. Exact timings and phasing will be confirmed during campaign planning in consultation with the GLA's contracted media planning and buying agency.

- 3.3 Media booking deadlines for the campaign are in February 2020 for a mid-March 2020 live date. A brief to the media agency should be issued as soon as possible and budget approval is required before this can take place.

4. Financial comments

- 4.1 This spending commitment will be met from within the GLA's budget provision for the 2020 Elections.

5. Legal comments

- 5.1 It is entirely appropriate for the GLRO, in a strictly impartial way, to encourage participation in the forthcoming Greater London Authority elections.

6. Planned delivery approach and next steps

- 6.1 Please note these dates should be viewed as indicative

Action	2019
Issue creative brief	August
Creative response to brief	September
Issue media brief	October
Approve decision	October
Wavemaker response to brief	October-November
Creative development testing	October
Creative production	November-December
Action	2020
Media booking	January-February
Deadline to supply TfL assets to TfL for approval	Approx. 4 February
Deadline to supply TfL assets to Mitie	Approx. 20 February (for buses – longest lead-in)
Deadline to supply campaign assets to Wavemaker	February
Campaign launch	Approx. 12 March
Beginning of pre-election period	23 March
Deadline for candidate withdrawals (candidates finalised)	1 April
Voter registration deadline	21 April
Polling day	7 May

Appendices and supporting papers:

None

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>Alex Chafey</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. D. Allen

Date

21.12.19

