

GREATER **LONDON** AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR MAYORAL DECISION – MD2562

Title: Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation Grant Funding

Executive Summary:

The Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum is a former German Nazi concentration and extermination camp in Poland. It was the largest of the German Nazi concentration and extermination camps, and is where over 1.1 million men, women and children were killed in the Second World War. The Memorial and Museum is devoted to telling the story of the Holocaust and the victims who died there and has a significant educational and research programme.

The Memorial and Museum is funded by the Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation - an independent non-governmental and non-profit organisation which was established in 2009 to gather and manage funds to finance conservation work and the preservation of all authentic remains of the site.

Approval is sought to provide grant funding to the Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation to support the ongoing conservation and preservation of the Museum and Memorial site. This will ensure it is able to continue to play an important role in educating Londoners on the Holocaust for many years to come.

Decision:

That the Mayor approves the payment of £300,000 in grant funding to the Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation to support the conservation and preservation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum site so that Londoners can continue to visit the site into the future.

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:

7/1/20

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

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. The Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation is an independent non-governmental and non-profit organisation registered in Warsaw, Poland. It was established in 2009 to gather and manage an Endowment Fund which will finance conservation work and the preservation of all authentic remains of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum site.
- 1.2. The statutory goal of the Foundation is to look after the Memorial site – the ground and remnants of the former concentration and extermination camps KL Auschwitz I and Auschwitz II-Birkenau, supervised by the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in Oświęcim, Poland.
- 1.3. In order to do this the Foundation aims to raise a capital endowment fund of 176 million Euros. The income generated by the capital is assigned to finance the conservation work on the grounds of Auschwitz-Birkenau, including the post-camp infrastructure and all personal items of former prisoners. The Foundation is continuing to raise funds ahead of the 75th Anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau which takes place in January 2020. Several national governments and cities have contributed to this fund to date, including Paris¹.
- 1.4. The Mayor of London has a statutory responsibility to further the promotion of social development in Greater London. This involves supporting all of London's diverse communities and promoting equality, tolerance and social integration in the city.
- 1.5. This is especially important at a time when we have seen incidences of hate crime increasing in the city. Anti-Semitic hate crime has increased in the twelve months to October 2019 by 9.39% compared to the preceding twelve months. 892 antisemitic incidents were recorded in the UK by the Community Security Trust (CST) in the first six months of 2019. 65% of these incidents occurred in the UK cities with the largest Jewish populations: Greater London and Greater Manchester. 453 incidents were reported to have taken place in London.²
- 1.6. The Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum and Memorial site, which the Foundation supports, plays a key role in educating the public about the Holocaust and the history of many Jewish Londoners.
- 1.7. The UK is home to 297,000 Jews – the second largest Jewish population in Europe behind France and the fifth largest Jewish community worldwide. London is home to an estimated 168,000 Jews – making it the home of the largest Jewish community in the UK³.
- 1.8. London's Jewish population grew significantly in the 1930's and 1940's when many European Jews fled to the UK to escape the Nazis. This included survivors of Auschwitz-Birkenau.
- 1.9. As well as being home to those who fled the concentration and extermination camp, London is home to family members of those who were murdered at the camp. The Foundation also provides a unique service where family members can search for lost relatives who may have been murdered at the camp. It has strong links to Jewish organisations in London including The Board of Deputies of British Jews, the Holocaust Educational Trust, Community Security Trust and Community Alliance to Combat Hate Crime (CATCH).

¹ Paris provided a grant fund of 300,000 Euros to the Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation in 2014

² https://cst.org.uk/data/file/3/d/IR_Jan-Jun_2019.1564410415.pdf

³ Available at:

www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/populationcharacteristicsresearchtables

- 1.10. The site also plays an important role in educating Londoners about the Holocaust. The UK represents the largest international visitor group to the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum. In 2017, 339,400 UK citizens visited the site. In England children are taught about the Holocaust as part of the Key Stage 3 History curriculum, and many London school children and teachers visit the site each year as part of their studies.⁴ In addition, the Museum provides free education resources on the Holocaust for teachers.
- 1.11. The Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum also has a connection to London's higher educational institutions. It has unrivalled expertise in the preservation of 20th century artefacts and the site houses state-of-the art labs to support this work. As part of the GLA's work to support the Foundation through this grant, the GLA has facilitated conversations between the Museum and London-based academic institutions to set up an exchange partnership which will allow students of preservation in London to visit the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum site and labs to learn about the preservation practices used there.
- 1.12. London's grant will help ensure this site remains open and accessible to Londoners for years to come.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1. The Foundation's Endowment Fund is entirely funded by donations and grants and all monies received by the Foundation are fully transferred to the Fund. The profits from the Endowment Fund are entirely transferred to the Memorial and Museum to cover the cost of preservation works.
- 2.2. The priorities for the coming 25 years for the Foundation include:
1. Preservation and subsequent preservation of the ruins of the gas chambers and crematoria;
 2. Conservation and conservation of the brick barracks in Auschwitz 2-Birkenau;
 3. Conservation of other objects of the BI section (Auschwitz 2-Birkenau);
 4. Conservation of the former potato warehouse (Auschwitz 2-Birkenau);
 5. Conservation and later preservation of wooden barracks (Auschwitz 2-Birkenau);
 6. Preservation of collections, exhibits, movable museum pieces and objects from archaeological work;
 7. Regulation of groundwater conditions;
 8. Conservation and later preservation of wooden barracks relics (Auschwitz 2-Birkenau);
 9. Conservation and subsequent preservation of wooden watchtowers; and
 10. Conservation of the blocks in the former Auschwitz I-Stammlager.
- 2.3. The expected outcomes for London and Londoners are:
- Better understanding of the Holocaust, and the history of many Jewish Londoners; and
 - Learning opportunities for young Londoners and students at London-based institutions.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. Under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 the Mayor must, when exercising his functions have due regard to the need to:

⁴ For example: 364 school children and teachers visited the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial Site and Museum in 2018-19 as part of organised trips by the Holocaust Educational Trust.

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- 3.2. The protected characteristics include: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Public authorities also need to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination against someone because of their marriage or civil partnership status.
- 3.3. The proposed contribution is to enable the Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation to continue to operate. It will ensure Londoners, including Jewish Londoners, are able to visit the site to learn about the Holocaust and the history of many Jewish people in Europe. This will contribute towards both the advancement of equality and will foster good relations between people who share protected characteristics, including on grounds of race, religion or belief, and those who do not.

4. Other considerations

a) Key risks and issues:

- 4.1. A one-off grant of this nature by definition lacks levers to monitor future outputs. This risk is mitigated by the fact that this grant is being provided as part of a major fundraising programme, to an institution with backing from both national and local governments. Appropriate financial due diligence will be carried out, and a grant agreement put in place.

b) Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities:

- 4.2. In his Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy the Mayor set out how he will work to create a fairer, more equal, integrated city where all people feel welcome and able to fulfil their potential. Specifically, objective 29 of the strategy commits to working with statutory and community sectors to help address the impact of crime on those groups and communities disproportionately affected by hate crime.

c) Other considerations:

- 4.3. There are no conflicts of interest to note for any of the officers involved in the drafting or clearance of this decision form.

d) Consultation:

- 4.4. Consultation has taken place with the Board of Deputies of British Jews and the Holocaust Educational Trust and both are supportive of this proposal.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1 Approval is sought to provide £300,000 in grant funding to the Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation to support the conservation and preservation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial site so that Londoners can continue to visit the site into the future.
- 5.2 Grant of £300,000 will be funded from 2019-20 Corporate Contingency budget.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1. The general powers of the GLA include the power under section 30 of the GLA Act 1999 to do anything which the GLA considers will further the promotion of social development in Greater London. The subsidiary powers of the GLA in section 34 of that Act allow the GLA to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the exercise of section 30 powers. For the reasons and justification set out above, the proposed payment of the grant would fall within the powers in section 30 and section 34 of the 1999 Act.
- 6.2. In determining whether or how to exercise section 30 powers, the Mayor, acting on behalf of the GLA, is required to have regard to the desirability of doing so, so far as reasonably practicable, to further the other principal purposes for which those powers may be exercised relating to promoting economic development and wealth creation and improvement of the environment in Greater London, and to achieve a reasonable balance between furthering each of the GLA's statutory purposes.
- 6.3. The power conferred by section 30 is exercisable only after consultation with such bodies or persons as the GLA may consider appropriate in the circumstances of this particular case, including: any London Borough Council; the Common Council; voluntary bodies some or all of whose activities benefit the whole or part of Greater London; bodies which represent the interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups in Greater London; and those that represent the interests of different religious groups or the interests of those carrying on business in Greater London.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
MD/CIB sign off	January 2020
Announcement	Mid-January 2020
Grant fund commencement date	January/February 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? YES

On the basis that this is planned for public announcement at a later date.

Until what date: 17 January 2020.

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:

Sneha Patel has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Sponsoring Director:

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

✓

Mayoral Adviser:

Leah Kreitzman and Debbie Weekes-Bernard have been consulted about the proposal and agrees the recommendations.

✓

Advice:

The Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal.

✓

Corporate Investment Board

This decision was agreed by the Corporate Investment Board on 6 January 2020.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES:

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

Signature

M. D. Ollie

Date 6.1.20

CHIEF OF STAFF:

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

Signature

D. Bellamy

Date 6/1/2020