

**REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD308**

**Title:** Built Environment Professional Education project 2015-16

**Executive Summary:**

The Paralympic Legacy Advisory Group (PLAG) jointly chaired by the Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture and the Minister for Disabled People. It seeks to ensure disability equality is mainstreamed within key policy areas. One of its main projects is the Built Environment Professional Education project (BEPE).

Approval is sought for expenditure of up to a maximum of £30,000 for the Built Environment Professional Education project (BEPE) for staffing resources.

**Decision:**

That the Assistant Director approves expenditure of up to £30,000 in 2015-16 on a grant award to the Office for Disability Issues to cover the GLA's contribution to the costs of a post to sit within the ODI for the purposes of managing the Built Environment Professional Education project.

**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:** Amanda Coyle

**Position:** Assistant Director of Health and Communities

**Signature:**

**Date:**

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

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

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

- 1.1 The Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture jointly chairs the Paralympic Legacy Advisory Group (PLAG) with the Minister for Disabled People. It seeks to ensure disability equality is mainstreamed within key policy areas. One of its main projects is the Built Environment Professional Education project (BEPE).
- 1.2 This follows research showing that Built Environment professionals are not sufficiently trained in Inclusive Design, with only one third of academics surveyed explicitly teaching ID principles. BEPE aims to achieve far-reaching change in inclusive design of buildings and the built environment for very little cost.

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

- 2.1 Since the project began 5 built environment professional institutions / industry organisations are supporting the project. Two have already changed their professional standards to embed inclusive design into their accreditation criteria and professional qualifications – the British Institute of Facilities Management and the Chartered Institution of Architectural Technologists. Two universities are actively supporting the project and work is progressing with the key built environment higher education networks – including CHOBE (Council of Heads of Built Environment), CHOPS (Council of Heads of Planning Schools) and SCHOSA (Standing Conference of Heads of Schools of Architecture) – to establish how educators can be supported in building capacity to teach, inspire and reward students in their learning about inclusive environments.
- 2.2 This will be the final year of the BEPE project and will consolidate existing relationships to ensure inclusive design can be embedded into the curricula and accreditation process. This final year will include an exit strategy to be developed by the project lead.
- 2.3 The GLA is increasing its funding to £30K which is 30% of the funding. Government is increasing its funding to cover the remaining 70%. This is a £10K increase in previous funding as this is a final year to put the structures in place to ensure a smooth exit. This will include increased engagement with educational institutions and an awards ceremony to recognise good practice in inclusive design.

#### **3. Equality comments**

- 3.1 The main purpose of this project is to eliminate unlawful discrimination in instances where the built environment is inaccessible for people with mobility impairments. This will be done by ensuring inclusive design is a key component within the curriculum. An accessible environment is a better environment for all.

#### **4. Other considerations**

##### *a) key risks and issues*

The key risk is not being able to secure sufficient commitment from autonomous universities and a range of professional institutions. This is why a high level board has been set up with a dedicated

staffing resource to engage individually and collectively with stakeholders to promote their involvement.

The GLA's population projections for London estimate an overall increase of nearly 18 per cent by 2031, but the number of older people (55 and over) will increase significantly more, at 39 per cent. As the disabled population tends to be older, ensuring that both London and its infrastructure are accessible and inclusive will become even more of a key priority.

*b) links to Mayoral strategies and priorities*

The success of the "most inclusive games ever" provides an opportunity to stimulate an increase in inclusive design in the built environment. There will be direct benefits for all Londoners, particularly disabled people and older people with mobility impairments, as well as parents with young children and carers. Studies have indicated the economic benefits of such design. The Built environment Education Project offers the opportunity for the Mayor to contribute to a great legacy from the Games.

*c) impact assessments and consultations.*

The GLA recognises that ensuring the Mayor's strategies and programmes are designed to take a proper account of disabled and older people's needs, is both a challenge and an opportunity.

The Assessment of the GLA's impact on disability equality 2013 highlighted evidence of key inequalities experienced by disabled people in the built environment, including: a lack of affordable and accessible housing (built to Lifetime Homes and Wheelchair Accessible Homes Standards); difficulties accessing the built environment and public realm and experiencing adverse effects of poorly designed, built and managed environments.

The close involvement of disabled people and their organisations is integral to the development of the project.

## **5. Financial comments**

- 5.1 Approval is being sought for GLA expenditure on the BEPE project in 2015-16. This will be via a funding agreement with the Office for Disability which will form part of the GLA's contribution towards the project, specifically funding staffing resource. The GLA's contribution will be up to the value of £30,000 and will be funded from the 'Paralympic Legacy: GLA Statutory Equality' budget held within the Health & Communities Unit.
- 5.2 Any changes to this proposal, including budgetary implications will be subject to further approval via the Authority's decision-making process. All appropriate budget adjustments will be made.
- 5.3 The Diversity & Social Policy Team within the Health & Communities Unit (Communities & Intelligence Directorate) will be jointly responsible for managing this programme and ensuring that all expenditure adheres to the Authority's Financial Regulations, Contracts & Funding Code, and Funding Agreement Toolkit.

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

- 6.1 A full-time staffing resource has been driving BEPE forward to promote the project, conduct stakeholder engagement, prepare quarterly updates to PLAG, facilitate the BEPE Advisory Board and coordinate packages of Inclusive Design content with leading academics. The full-time post is based in the Office for Disability Issues in DWP. The GLA's contribution of £30,000 per annum towards the post (2015-16) will be made to the Office for Disability Issues via a funding agreement.

### **Appendices and supporting papers:**

N/A

**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:**

Huma Munshi has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms that the Finance team has 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:**