

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2225

Title: Social media software, Sprout Social

Executive Summary:

Since March 2014, the GLA's Marketing team and social media channel managers across the GLA have been using social media software, Sprout Social, to assist with collaborative working and reporting. Since October 2016, the software has also been used to manage the Mayor's social media channels. Since September 2017, the GLA's Public Liaison Unit has been using the software to provide Londoners with social media customer service.

Sprout Social enables publishing of content, monitoring of interactions and management of the GLA channels on a single-use interface. Sprout Social is now fully embedded across the GLA. The GLA is happy with the performance of the software and would like to continue to use Sprout Social for a further year until 31 March 2019.

Decision:

That the Assistant Director, External Relations approves:

1. Expenditure of up to £30,000 from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 on social media software, Sprout Social to assist in the effective management of the GLA's suite of official social media channels; and
2. A related exemption under the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code from the requirement to procure services competitively.

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, External Relations

Signature:



Date: 21.5.18

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. The GLA Marketing and Digital Communications teams as well as social media channel managers across the GLA have been managing the GLA's suite of official social media channels using social media software, Sprout Social, since March 2014. The software helps the GLA with collaborative working and reporting and enables GLA staff to be responsive to Londoners.
- 1.2. Teams across the GLA use the software and feedback is positive. For business continuity, the GLA would like to extend usage of Sprout Social until 31 March 2019.
- 1.3. It is necessary that all team members have an individual login for audit and accountability purposes. The GLA would like to increase its investment to cover logins as the team grows.
- 1.4. Section 9 of the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code requires, where the expected value of a contract for services is between £10,000 and £150,000, the services required should be tendered or called off from an accessible framework. Section 10 provides however, that an exemption from this requirement may be approved where the proposed contractor has had previous involvement in a project or is to continue existing work which cannot be separated from the new project/work.
- 1.5. Social media software and services were procured competitively from Sprout Social in 2014. It is proposed that we continue our contract with Sprout Social until March 2019. This is because Sprout Social has been fully embedded across the organisation. The ease of use this platform offers is significant as it is used by both communications and non-communications professionals across the GLA. It is an essential tool for managing, publishing and reporting on the performance of the GLA's social media channels to ensure that the organisation's objectives are achieved.
- 1.6. The total value of the GLA's contract with Sprout Social to date is £88,844 across ADD300, ADD189, ADD 2098 and DD1512.
- 1.7. Officers consider therefore, that because of Sprout Social's previous involvement, best value would be secured by the proposed award of contract to Sprout Social. The Assistant Director's approval of an exemption from the requirement of section 10 of the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code to tender for the services required or call them off from an accessible framework is sought accordingly.

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. The software also enables the GLA to report effectively on the performance of its social media channels against its digital communications objectives.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. Under s149 of the Equality Act 2010, as a public authority the Mayor must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, and to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion) and foster good

relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

- 3.2. The construction of all GLA marketing and communications activity is to take into consideration the audience for which the activity is aimed at. In every case, materials are assessed to ensure they are fully accessible and in line with the public sector equality duty.

4. Other considerations

Key risks and issues

- 4.1. The success of the GLA's social media output relies on collaborative working, prompt and helpful responses to Londoners and compelling and engaging content. The risk of not employing Sprout Social is that it would disrupt the operative processes embedded into the GLA for the last four years, the collaborative procedures followed by staff and the successes delivered to date.

Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

- 4.2. This work is linked to the GLA's core business objectives to:

- Increase awareness of the work of the Mayor, the London Assembly and the GLA are doing on behalf of Londoners.
- Increase understanding, engagement and participation in key projects, events and campaigns.
- Increase Londoners' opportunities to access and influence London government.

The use of Sprout Social ensures the efficient use of resources across the organisation and that social media content and messaging is relevant and impactful for Londoners.

Impact assessments and consultations

- 4.3. 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 Marketing and Digital Communications teams as well as channel managers would like to continue to use Sprout Social following four years of successful use.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1. The estimated cost of up to £30,000 for this contract will be funded from the 2018-19 Marketing Programme budget held within the External Affairs Directorate.

6. Legal Comments

- 6.1. Section 9 of the GLA Contracts and Funding Code (the "Code") requires the GLA to call off the services required from an accessible framework or conduct an advertised tender. However, the Assistant Director may approve an exemption from this requirement under Section 10 of the Code upon certain specified grounds. One of those grounds is where the proposed provider has had previous involvement in a project or is to continue existing work which cannot be separated from the new project/work. Officers have indicated in section 1 of this report that this ground applies and that they are satisfied the proposed contract affords value for money.
- 6.2. In taking the decisions requested, the Assistant Director must have due regards to the Public Sector Equality Duty; namely the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, and to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (race, disability, gender, age, sexual

orientation, religion) and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). To this end, the Assistant Director should have particular regard to section 3 of this report.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Delivery Start Date	April 2018
Delivery End Date	March 2019
Project Closure	March 2019

Supporting papers:

ADD 300
ADD 189
ADD 2098
DD 1512

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:**

Natasha Hutchinson has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms that the Finance and –if relevant- Legal teams have commented on this proposal as required, and this decision reflects their comments.

Corporate Investment Board:

The Corporate Investment Board reviewed this proposal on 21 May 2018.

HEAD OF FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE:

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

Signature:



Date:

22.05.18

