

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2446

Title: The Mayor's Civic Innovation Challenge – Countering Violent Extremism Online

Executive Summary:

The Mayor (under cover of MD2491) approved in August 2019 expenditure of up to £135,000 on a second Civic Innovation Challenge, including the expenditure of up to £60,000 of grant funding for three challenges.

One of the challenges, Countering Violent Extremism Online is being delivered in collaboration with the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC). The original proposal was for MOPAC to provide revenue grant funding to the GLA and for the GLA to contract with the challenge winner. It has now been decided for the GLA to provide a revenue grant of £20,000 to MOPAC who will contract with the challenge winner. The expenditure of £20,000 for the Civic Innovation Challenges was authorised under MD2491 and this does not constitute new expenditure.

This decision seeks approval to grant fund MOPAC £20,000 in accordance with s.121 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 which will be earmarked for the delivery of a solution in response to the Civic Innovation Challenge Countering Violent Extremism Online Challenge.

Decision:

That the Interim Head of Economic Development approves the award of a revenue grant of £20,000 from the GLA to the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime in accordance with s.121 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999; and authorises officers to agree arrangements under which the grant is to be applied towards expenditure incurred for the purposes of, or in connection with, the discharge of the functions of MOPAC to which the grant is made.

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: Luke Bruce

Position: Interim Head of Economic Development

Signature:

Date:

29 April 2020



PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. The Mayor (under cover of MD2491) approved in August 2019 expenditure of up to £135,000 on a second Civic Innovation Challenge (CIC) programme. The programme seeks the tech community's help to solve some of the strategic challenges that London is facing whilst also supporting the growth and innovation of London's tech sector. The 2019/2020 programme's key outputs included:
 - identification of three key challenges facing London: ensuring the planning system helps meet housing need (with GLA Planning Officers); countering the spread of terrorist content online (with the Metropolitan Police Service); and making freight more efficient (with Transport for London).
 - a high-profile launch event at Microsoft's Flagship Store in Oxford Circus that the Mayor attended with Cindy Rose, Microsoft UK CEO and over 100 VIP attendees across London's tech ecosystem.
 - creating a shortlist (from 125 entrants) of 22 companies who benefited from a three-week curriculum delivered by our partners, Social Tech Trust and Microsoft, to access knowledge, skills and opportunities to grow. In addition, another 20 companies have been working with Transport for London to try to secure funding and support in developing their ideas.
 - two challenge winners – for the democratising planning and countering violent extremism online – awarded total grant funding of £40,000.
- 1.2. The Countering Violent Extremism Online Challenge is delivered with support from the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) – who provide access to knowledge, staff time, expertise and data to the winning tech startup – and the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), who will provide match funding of £20,000.
- 1.3. It was originally proposed that MOPAC would provide match funding to the GLA and the GLA would contract with the successful supplier. However, it has been decided that given this project concerns counter-terrorism, it would be beneficial for MOPAC and MPS to lead on this. As MOPAC is the contracting authority on behalf of MPS, the proposal is for MOPAC to contract with the successful supplier, with the GLA supporting the delivery of a solution to the Countering Violent Extremism Online Challenge where necessary.
- 1.4. Therefore, this decision seeks approval to grant fund MOPAC up to £20,000 in accordance with s.121 of the GLA Act 1999 which will be earmarked for services to be delivered relating to the development of a solution in response to the Countering Violent Extremism Online Challenge. The expenditure of £20,000 for the Civic Innovation Challenges was authorised under MD2491 and this does not constitute new expenditure.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1. The Countering Violent Extremism Online Challenge aims to use technology to stop the spread of terrorist and violent extremist material online and make London safer. The GLA and the MPS/MOPAC were looking for start-ups and SMEs to co-create a solution that would:
 - increase public engagement with online counter-terrorism efforts and engendering a strong public partnership with the MPS's Counter-Terrorism Internet Referral Unit (CTIRU); and

- increase the quantity and quality of referrals, thereby increasing the amount of terrorist content that is removed from the internet and assisting the CTIRU in countering terrorism.
- 2.2. Through a competitive procurement process which involved an open call to London's technology sector, over 50 applications had been shortlisted to nine suppliers who spent up to 5 weeks working with GLA and MPS to refine their proposals. Of these nine, a successful supplier has been selected to receive the grant funding of £40,000 and will work with the CTIRU to achieve these aims through the development of a smartphone app to enable people to report extremist images, videos, and documents seen on their phones, with guaranteed privacy and anonymity. Reports from the app will feed into the CTIRU public referral tool.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. Under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, as a public authority, the Mayor of London must have 'due regard' of the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation as well as to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 3.2. The CIC looks to maximise its positive impact on equality for all Londoners through addressing key issues such as the under-representation of people of BME origin in the tech sector: we capture this data in surveys during the programme to ensure that diversity and inclusion is monitored throughout. This is achieved by promoting through a wide variety of channels to reach out to underrepresented groups and forming strategic partnerships with tech diversity associations.
- 3.3. The CIC promotes the Good Work Standard – an initiative which sets the benchmark the Mayor wants every London employer to work towards and achieve – amongst companies to encourage employers to adopt measures to make their businesses fairer, safer and more equal places to work. This includes ensuring businesses embrace key principles centred around fair pay and contracts; workforce wellbeing; skills and progression; and diversity and recruitment.
- 3.4. Events are accessible and communication channels are used to showcase and celebrate innovation across a diverse SME base. As part of delivery, officers ensure that the nature of the services offered by tech SMEs does not impact individuals with protected characteristics in a negative way by ensuring that all parties are aware of their responsibilities under the Equality Act and that novel service delivery methods do not adversely impact it.

4. Other considerations

Risk register:

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
The Supplier is delayed in meeting contract milestones due to the current impact of Covid-19.	Medium	Low	We will work with MOPAC and MPS to ensure that the contract reflects sufficient flexibility in timings to allow for extensions of deadlines due to Covid-19.
Delay to contracting undermines SME confidence in the Civic Innovation Challenge process	Low	Low	We will work with MOPAC and the MPS to ensure that there are no further delays to contracting and the supplier is paid promptly.

Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

- 4.1. The objectives and outcomes of this programme are fully aligned with the following commitments from the Mayor's Economic Development Strategy:
- support the tech and digital sector, which is helping to drive innovation across all sectors of the economy and providing platforms for entire new industries, business models and services;
 - stimulating innovation across the tech sector to solve London's challenges and supporting co-design with Londoners and the market;
 - helping London's entrepreneurs to innovate with data and technology; and
 - making London a global testbed for tech-driven solutions to public service challenges and global environmental challenges.
- 4.2. The objectives of the Countering Violent Extremism Online Challenge are fully aligned with the Mayor's Countering Violent Extremism programme includes an objective to 'reduce the ability for those who wish to use the internet to promote violent extremism, and to increase the ability of the public to refer such content to the authorities for swift consideration to removal'.
- 4.3. It can be confirmed that no conflicts of interest were noted in the drafting and clearance of this decision.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1. Approval is being sought to grant fund MOPAC up to £20,000 in accordance with s.121 of the GLA Act 1999 which will be earmarked for services to be delivered relating to the development of a solution in response to the Countering Violent Extremism Online Challenge.
- 5.2. The £20,000 grant for this proposal will be funded from the LEAP Core Budget for 2020-21 as previously approved by MD2491.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1. Paragraphs 1 to 2 of this report indicate that the decisions requested of the Assistant Director concern the exercise of the GLA's general powers, falling within the GLA's statutory powers to do such things considered to further or which are facilitative of, conducive or incidental to the promotion of economic development and wealth creation, social development or the promotion of the improvement of the environment in Greater London; and in formulating the proposals in respect of which a decision is sought officers have complied with the GLA's related statutory duties to:
- pay due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people;
 - consider how the proposals will promote the improvement of health of persons, health inequalities between persons and to contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom; and
 - consult with appropriate bodies.
- 6.2. In taking the decisions requested, the Assistant Director must have due regard 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 or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment) 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 (above) of this report.

- 6.3. Section 121 of the GLA Act 1999 provides that the GLA may pay a grant towards meeting the revenue expenditure incurred or to be incurred by another functional body, MOPAC, for the purposes of, or in connection with, the discharge of its functions. Officers must ensure an appropriate funding letter is put in place between GLA and MOPAC before any commitment to fund is made, noting that conditions may not be attached to such grants.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Delivery Start Date	May 2020
Report produced	August 2020
Delivery End Date	September 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? NO

If YES, for what reason:

Until what date: (a date is required if deferring)

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:

Maria Geftar, has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Corporate Investment Board

This decision was agreed by the Corporate Investment Board on 27 April 2020.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE:

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

Signature



Date

27 April 2020