

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2153

Title: Spike digital engagement monitoring software

Executive Summary

Approval is being sought to purchase the social media engagement monitoring tool, Spike. Spike will enable the GLA to monitor social engagement with news stories about London across social media channels more effectively – and to see which news stories are driving the most engagement in real-time. This will help us to understand better the evolving media landscape and will ensure the GLA delivers a timely and effective service to Londoners across its communications channels.

In summary, the use of Spike would enable the GLA to:

- understand better which stories and topics matter the most to Londoners, ensuring its content matches with what Londoners want to hear about from City Hall online; and
- work in a more efficient way by bringing together monitoring across social media channels and news websites into one dashboard.

Decision:

That the Assistant Director of External Relations approves:

1. expenditure of up to £30,000 from August 2017 to July 2018 on a licence for the use of social media engagement tool, Spike, and
2. a related exemption from the requirement of the GLA's Contracts & Funding Code to procure 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: 30.8.2017

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 The GLA is seeking approval to purchase a license for the use of social media engagement monitoring tool, Spike. Spike will enable the GLA to effectively monitor social engagement with news stories about London across social media channels and will enable the GLA to see which news stories are driving the most engagement in real-time. This will help us to better understand the evolving media landscape, and will ensure the GLA delivers a timely, effective, and good service to Londoners across our communications channels.
- 1.2 Spike will enable the GLA to understand better which stories and topics matter the most to Londoners, ensuring our content matches with what Londoners want to hear about from City Hall online.
- 1.3 Spike will enable the GLA to work in a more efficient way by bringing together monitoring across social media channels and news websites into one dashboard.
- 1.4 Officers acknowledge that 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 11 provides however, that an exemption from this requirement may be approved where the proposed contractor has certain technical, artistic, exclusive right or intellectual property rights.
- 1.5 NewsWhip is unique in their ability to meet, at this point in time, the needs of the GLA's social media and news service in that their Spike product uses patented technology not yet available to the GLA elsewhere to provide a unique way to monitor social media and the news together on one dashboard. It is unlikely therefore, that a procurement exercise would identify a solution providing comparable functionality and in any event at the proposed price.
- 1.6 Approval of an exemption from the requirement of section 9 of the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code to procure the supplies in question competitively is therefore, sought.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1. The objective of using Spike is to provide the GLA with a comprehensive social media engagement tool. It allows the GLA to monitor the broader conversation on social media so we can engage as appropriate. It enables the GLA to continuously learn what Londoners want from the GLA's official channels and therefore improve our social media presence on an ongoing basis.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. The general duty to promote equality arising from the Equality Act 2010, which requires the Mayor to have due regard to the need to "encourage people who share protected characteristics (which there are nine; age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation) to participate in public life or in other activity in which their participation is disproportionately low". This sits alongside the Mayor's duty, set out in the Greater London Authority Act 1999, to have regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between different minority groups.
- 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

4.1. Key risks and issues

The success of the GLA's social media operation relies on collaborative working, prompt and helpful responses to Londoners and compelling and engaging content. The risk of not employing Spike is not having a clear picture of what the biggest issues are for Londoners and not being able to engage and respond accordingly in real time.

4.2 Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

External Affairs' priorities in the GLA business plan 2015-17 include:

- Deliver an effective and efficient public information service to support the Mayor's and the GLA's communication with Londoners (p71)
- Deliver integrated marketing campaigns utilising both digital and traditional marketing assets, which allow the Authority to promote its work effectively and listen to Londoners' opinions and concerns. (p72)

4.3 Impact assessments and consultations

As Spike uses patented technology to offer the GLA a unique way to monitor social media and the news together on one dashboard, it is unlikely that a further procurement exercise would find a supplier which offers a similar service.

5. Financial comments

5.1 Approval is being sought for expenditure of up to £30,000 on a social media monitoring tool and is expected to occur over two financial years.

5.2 As this service is very specific, a suitable and appropriate supplier has been sourced accordingly.

5.3 This expenditure will be met from the Marketing, Brand and Digital Unit 2017/18 Budget.

6. Legal Comments

6.1 The foregoing sections of this report indicate that:

6.1.1 the decisions requested of the assistant director concern the exercise of the GLA's general powers, falling within the statutory powers of the GLA to do such things as may be considered to further, and or be facilitative of or conducive or incidental to the discharge of the GLA's principal purposes; and

6.1.2 in formulating the proposals in respect of which a decision is sought officers have complied with the GLA's related statutory duties to:

- (a) pay due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people;
- (b) 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
- (c) 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 persons who do not share it 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 The GLA's 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, an assistant director may approve an exemption from this requirement under section 10 of the Code upon certain specified grounds. One of those grounds is exemptions may be approved where the proposed contractor holds certain technical, artistic, exclusive rights or intellectual property rights. Officers have indicated at section 1 of this report that this ground applies and so the assistant director may approve this request if satisfied with the content of this report.
- 6.4 In the event that the assistant director makes the decisions sought officers must ensure that the GLA enters into an appropriate contract with Newswhip for the licensed use of Spike in advance of the commencement of such use.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Procurement of contract	August 2017
Delivery Start Date	August 2017
Final evaluation start and finish (self/external):	July 2018
Delivery End	July 2018
Project Closure:	July 2018

Appendices and supporting papers:

None

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:

Natasha Hutchinson has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms that the Finance and 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 29 August 2017

HEAD OF FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE:

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

Signature:



Date:

29.08.17

