

GREATER **LONDON** AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR MAYORAL DECISION – MD2535

Title: Talk London Website Redesign

Executive Summary:

Talk London is City Hall's online community, empowering Londoners to shape a better capital via meaningful debate and consultations.

Recent stakeholder and user research provided up-to-date insights as to the needs of our users, and we now need to refresh the design and functionality of Talk London to make it easier and more appealing for all Londoners to take part. This form seeks approval for expenditure supporting this project.

Decision:

That the Mayor approves:

Expenditure of up to £240,000 across financial years 2019/20 and 2020/21 (and as per the breakdown at paragraph 1.4) to support the delivery of a refreshed design for Talk London and new functionality to make it easier for Londoners to take part, and to appeal to a more diverse audience online.

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:

11/11/19

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

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. Talk London is City Hall's online community, placing Londoners' needs at the centre of strategies and programmes by involving citizens in meaningful research, debate and consultation about how to improve the capital.
- 1.2. Talk London has almost 50,000 members and has delivered 12,000 responses to City Hall statutory consultations; involved thousands of members in GLA policy development and the design of products and services; and secured input to London Assembly committee investigations, at no additional cost to policy teams.
- 1.3. In June 2018, MD2300 gave permission for Talk London to deliver projects that would grow our user base to ensure it better reflects London's population (for example by attracting more young Londoners (16-24), BAME Londoners and social renters) . We have demonstrated that our actions in the last 12 months, including The London Budget Challenge campaign, testing a more compelling homepage, lowering the sign up age to 16, and outreach activity for the Priorities for Londoners survey have achieved greater numbers of people from these groups joining the community.
- 1.4. Recent stakeholder and user research provided up-to-date insights as to the needs of our users, and we now wish to refresh the design and functionality of Talk London to make it easier and more appealing for all Londoners to take part. In order to make further progress, we are now seeking approval for funding to support the delivery of a website design refresh and supporting advertising and campaign spend, as follows:

Type	2019/2020 spend	2020/2021 spend	Description
Digital agencies	£70,000	£20,000	To refresh the Talk London website design, including visual design, user experience, accessibility and interaction design.
Development agencies	£85,000	£40,000	To implement the new designs, new functionality and upgrading the software base for the Talk London website.
Campaign and advertising	£25,000		To run continuous targeted acquisition activities for our target audiences, as well as supporting project-specific acquisition and outreach.
TOTAL	£240,000		

- 1.5. Procurement of digital agencies, development agencies and will take place through existing frameworks and processes, as appropriate.
- 1.6. We anticipate this funding would enable the redesign and development work over an 8-10-month period. We would be continuously testing, iterating and working in an agile way to make sure that the new designs and functionality resonate with our audience.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- A full redesign and new functionality for the Talk London website, taking into account user experience and interaction design, and the need to visually appeal to a more diverse audience.
- The redesign will also assess website accessibility standards, updating the Talk London website where necessary to ensure that it is accessible.
- The Talk London website is currently running on Drupal 7, but with the redesign will concurrently be upgraded to Drupal 8.
- Delivery of ongoing, targeted advertising and outreach supporting the engagement work plan and in order to acquire new Talk London members.
- This is all in support of the Talk London goal of making the audience as reflective of London as possible through acquiring more of our under-represented audiences and increasing the Talk London membership so that more Londoners can have a say in City Hall policies and programmes.

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 website redesign will ensure the Talk London site is more appealing to a diverse audience and that it is easier to take part. Demographic information collected on registration will ensure we are aware who joins and participates in Talk London and, will inform our acquisition strategy and our site redesign.
- 3.3. During the design refresh, the Talk London site will undergo the necessary upgrade from Drupal 7 to Drupal 8 and will be brought in line with accessibility regulations, which we would need to comply with by September 2020.

4. Other considerations

- 4.1. Risks and issues: Talk London was established to gather Londoners' views to help steer important policy decisions. It is therefore important that we reach and engage Londoners from all walks of life in our work. The site redesign will specifically monitor participation rates from different audiences and a test, learn and iterate approach will mitigate the risk that the site will not appeal to the ensure we create a website that appeals to a diverse audience. Our acquisition and outreach will target those audiences we are underrepresented on, to bolster numbers of those who are traditionally harder to reach and mitigate risks involved in not engaging with broad sections of the community.
- 4.2. Linked projects: London.gov is currently running a discovery project and learnings from the Talk London design refresh and testing will feed into this process, helping to inform the discovery and future integration.
- 4.3. GDPR: The Talk London team will work with the appropriate GLA data protection officer to ensure that all updates to Talk London are GDPR compliant.
- 4.4. Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities: The Mayor has stated that he wants to lead the most engaged, transparent administration seen at City Hall. The Talk London community ensures we allow Londoners to participate in the design, development and delivery of strategies, policies, interventions and services. Part of the Talk London work will support high-profile engagement activities from across all policy departments at the GLA and MOPAC.

- 4.5. Conflicts of interest: There are no conflicts of interest to note for any of those involved in the drafting or clearance of the decision.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1 Approval is being sought for expenditure of up to £240,000 (profiled as £180k 2019/20 and £60k 2020/21) to support the delivery of a refreshed design for Talk London and new functionality. This expenditure will be funded by the 2019-20 Talk London Budget, held within the Intelligence Unit.

6. Legal comments

Powers

- 6.1 The foregoing sections of this report indicate that the decisions requested of the Mayor fall within the statutory powers of the Authority to promote and/or to do anything which is facilitative of or conducive or incidental to social development within Greater London and in formulating the proposals in respect of which a decision is sought officers have complied with the Authority'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 of him, the Mayor 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 Mayor should have particular regard to section 3 (above) of this report.

Procurement

- 6.3 This decision requests authority to expend up to £240,000 to refresh the design of the Authority's Talk London website and associated project-specific activities. To that end, the officers must ensure that all procurements related to the said project comply with the Authority's contracts and funding code and that they be conducted in consultation with Transport for London's procurement team.
- 6.4 Also, the officers must ensure that legal agreements be put in place between the service providers and the Authority, before the service providers commence work on the project.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

- 7.1. Project sponsorship is provided by Dr Nick Bowes. Selina Holliday (Talk London Digital Engagement & Product Manager) will manage the project, working closely with colleagues from Digital, Marketing and TG.

Activity	Timeline
Digital Agency Procurement	December 2019
Delivery Start Date	December 2019
Delivery End Date	August 2020
Programme evaluation and recommendations	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:

Selina Holliday 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:

Nick Bowes has 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 11 November 2019.

✓

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES:

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

Signature



Date


11.11.19

TOM MIDDLETON ON BEHALF OF MARTIN CLARKE

CHIEF OF STAFF:

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

Signature



Date

11/11/2019.