

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR DIRECTOR DECISION – DD2463

Title: Skills Advisory Panel implementation funding 2020/21

Executive Summary:

Skills Advisory Panels (SAPs) aim to bring together local employers and skills providers to pool knowledge on skills and labour market needs, working together to understand and address key local skills challenges.

On behalf of the Greater London Authority (GLA), the Mayor's Skills for Londoners (SfL) Board leads on the SAPs work. Comprising public and private sector employers, local authorities, colleges and universities, the SfL Board advises the Mayor on skills and employment priorities in London, so is already configured to support the SAP funding and its constitution has been updated to reflect these additional responsibilities

As set out in [DD2345](#), the Department for Education (DfE) provided each SAP area with £75,000 funding in 2019/20. The DfE has now confirmed that each SAP area will receive a further £75,000 for 2020/21 to help continue to analyse local skills needs and priorities.

It is proposed that this funding is used to continue to part fund two specialist data analysts that were recruited following the last round of funding to support the analytical requirements of the SAP. The posts also support the Adult Education Budget programme, which will require ongoing, holistic analysis of the skills and labour market in London.

As with the previous SAP funding, this grant will be subject to a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The MoU will stipulate the purpose of the grant and set out how the funding will be used to support the analytical requirements of the SAP. The GLA will also be asked to provide a Use of Funds statement at the end of the Financial Year 2020-21.

Decision:

That the Executive Director, Communities and Skills approves:

1. the receipt of £75,000 from the Department for Education in 2019-20 to help analyse local skills needs and priorities as a part of the Skills Advisory Panel (SAP) programme; and
2. expenditure of the same to continue to fund two dedicated employment, skills and education analysts to support the analytical requirements of the SAP, in addition to the Adult Education Budget programme.

AUTHORISING DIRECTOR

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: Sarah Mulley and Halima Khan

Position: Executive Directors,
Communities and Skills

Signature:



Date:

17.03.20

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. Skills Advisory Panels (SAPs) are a 2017 HM Government manifesto commitment and a key initiative under Government's Industrial Strategy to address mismatches between skills supply and employer demand more effectively. The aim of SAPs is to support local partnerships comprising local employers, skills providers and local government to pool knowledge on skills and labour market needs, and to work together to understand and address key local challenges.
- 1.2. The development of SAPs also aims to strengthen the capability of local areas to understand current and future skills needs and labour market challenges in their areas, allowing them to draw up action plans to address skills issues. The SAPs are also expected to provide analysis to inform the 'People' element of the Local Industrial Strategies (LIS) and local post-16 skills provision, so that skills provision better meets labour market needs, now and in the future.
- 1.3. In order to achieve this aim, in 2019/20 the Department for Education (DfE) provided £75,000 implementation funding to each local area for the purpose of building capacity, growing local capability sustainably and for producing high quality analysis to underpin the work of the SAP. This was approved under [DD2345](#).
- 1.4. The DfE has now confirmed an additional £75,000 funding to each SAP area in 2020/21 to continue to support the aims of the SAP. The funding is expected to be used to achieve two broad objectives:
 - publish a Local Skills Report by March 2021; and
 - further develop our analytical capability in a sustainable way, which includes developing a local action plan.
- 1.5. On behalf of GLA, the Skills for Londoners Board holds the SAP responsibilities for London¹, closely supported by the Skills for Londoners Business Partnership² and the London Economic Action Partnership (LEAP) - the Local Enterprise Partnership for London. The Skills for Londoners Board acts as the approving body for all SAP funding decisions and endorsed the proposed use of this additional funding at its meeting on 11 February 2020.
- 1.6. The GLA's approach to developing a LIS was approved by the LEAP Board on 19 December 2018. The GLA Skills & Employment Unit and London Councils are working jointly to develop the 'People' section of the LIS. Expenditure of £60,000 was approved under [DD2337](#) for consultancy services to undertake research and analysis required to develop an evidence base for the 'People' strands of the LIS submission.. In addition, approval for funding elements of the LIS led by the Regeneration and Economic Development Unit, totalling £170,000, was agreed under cover of [MD2429](#).

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1. The £75,000 funding is provided for the 2020/21 financial year and will be used to continue funding two dedicated skills and employment analysts to support the work of the Skills & Employment Unit and the Adult Education Budget (AEB).
- 2.2. As indicated above, the work will be overseen by the Skills for Londoners Board, which is the SAP for London, working closely with the Skills for Londoners Business Partnership and LEAP. This will ensure that the analysis produced by the posts is able to influence strategic skills and employment decisions in London.
- 2.3. The posts were established last year and sit in the GLA Economics team, working closely with the Skills & Employment Unit to support the development of employment and skills policy and programmes in

¹ In other areas the SAP forms part of the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) or Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA).

² This business-led partnership is responsible for advising the Mayor on how to improve and better align skills provision including specialist, industry-relevant and higher-level skills provision to meet skills needs in London.

London. The posts provide analysis to support the development and implementation of the Skills for Londoners Framework, which sets out the Mayor's plans for the Adult Education Budget (AEB) and other skills and employment funding. As the SAP funding is not confirmed for future years, the permanent posts will continue to be funded by the GLA following the expiry of these grant funds.

- 2.4. In order to receive the funding, the GLA will be required to enter into a MoU to the DfE, detailing current capacity and capabilities and setting out the arrangements to use the funding to grow local analytical capability and deliver the SAP role sustainably.
- 2.5. The DfE published further guidance on the role and governance of SAPs in 2019.³ The guidance sets out how HM Government will support SAPs and its expectations as to their role, structure and governance.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. In carrying out any functions in respect of his skills and employment programmes, including the work of the SAP, the Mayor will comply with the public sector equality duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.
- 3.2. Under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, as a public authority, the GLA must have 'due regard' of the need to:
 - eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
 - advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 3.3. The evidence base for the Skills for Londoners Strategy found that key groups with protected characteristics, including women, BAME Londoners and disabled Londoners are under-represented in London's labour market. The funded posts will support work to develop actions to address this, including the creation of inclusive and good quality education and transition opportunities for all, with targeted actions to improve access for protected and under-represented groups. The posts will also support the development of proposals to deliver economic fairness and a more inclusive London, with proposed actions to promote diversity, inclusion and community cohesion.

4. Other considerations

Risks arising/mitigations

- 4.1 As is usual practice, and in line with member terms of appointment, members of the Skills for Londoners Board, Skills for Londoners Business Partnership and subordinate bodies will be stood down at the end of the Mayoral term ahead of the Mayor of London and London Assembly elections in May 2020. Sfl governance arrangements will be reviewed at the start of the next Mayoral term. Should any SAP decisions be required before the Sfl Board (or any successor body) next meets, these will be considered by the Skills for Londoners Programmes Board. This is an Officer level board which is used to discuss internal decision making within the Skills & Employment Unit. Agendas and minutes are not published, and the Board will not be stood down during the pre-election period.

Links with Mayoral Strategies

- 4.2. The funded posts will support the development of employment and skills policy and programmes in London.

- 4.3. The Skills for Londoners Strategy sets out the need to improve London's skills system across a number of areas, particularly the AEB which has been delegated to the Mayor. The funded posts will support the development of this work.
- 4.4. There are no conflicts of interest to declare from those involved in the drafting or clearance of this decision.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1 Approval is being sought to accept receipt of £75,000 from DfE which will be used to help support the analysis of local skills needs and priorities as part of the Skills Advisory Panel (SAP) Programme for 2020-21.
- 5.2 As detailed within the main body of this report, there is currently no commitment from DfE for funding beyond the 2020-21 financial year. Any additional costs beyond the 2020/2021 funding period, must be contained within the skills and employment budget.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1. The foregoing sections of this report indicate that the decisions requested of the Executive 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.
- 6.2. In implementing the proposals in respect of which a decision is sought, officers should comply 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.
- 6.3. In taking the decisions requested, the Executive Director must have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, namely the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, gender, religion or belief, sexual orientation) and to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. To this end, the Executive Director should have particular regard to section 3 (above) of this report.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Receipt of funding	Spring 2020
Publish a Local Skills Report	March 2021
Continuation of posts to be funded by GLA	After April 2021

Appendices and supporting papers:

Appendix 1: Fact Sheet on SAPs Announcement

Appendix 2: SAPs Evidence Guidance Document

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:

Laura Marshall has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Assistant Director/Head of Service:

Michelle Cuomo Boorer has reviewed the documentation and is satisfied for it to be referred to the Sponsoring Director for approval.

✓

Financial and Legal advice:

The Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal, and this decision reflects their comments.

✓

Corporate Investment Board

This decision was agreed by the Corporate Investment Board on 16 March 2020.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES:

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

Signature

M. J. Allen

Date

18 March 2020

