

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2502

Delivery support and rapid review for Healthy Schools London

Executive Summary:

Healthy Schools London (HSL) is a Mayor of London programme that supports and recognises school achievements in improving pupil health and wellbeing. This ADD seeks approval to spend up to £45,000 to procure specialist support for the HSL team. This will be to redesign and reshape the Healthy Schools Programme to ensure London Boroughs and schools are supported as we emerge from lockdown and children return to schools, to ensure a deeper focus on addressing inequalities and improving the health and wellbeing of children through recovery. This will be achieved by undertaking the following:

1. Rapid evidence of outputs and impact review of HSL.
2. Providing insights and learning to inform the HSL programme to support schools and HSL Borough Leads with COVID response and recovery.

Decision:

That the Assistant Director of Health, Education & Youth approves:

Expenditure of up to £45,000 to procure external support to spread and encourage the take up of good practice identified through the Rapid review of evidence and impact of HSL- backed interventions and activities. This responds to the needs of pupils, teachers and schools and supports them in overcoming the impacts of COVID-19 on health and wellbeing in schools.

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: Jazz Bhogal

Position: Assistant Director – Health, Education & Youth

Signature:



Date:

1 March 2021

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 The Mayor wants to see all London's children enjoying environments that allow them to develop well and thrive, and to help more children achieve a healthy weight, particularly in deprived communities. To support children to have the best start in life, he wants their mental health and wellbeing to be better supported across a wide range of settings. Furthermore, children in London are more likely to be overweight or obese than their peers in the rest of England.
- 1.2 The Healthy Early Years London and the Healthy Schools London (previously approved under MD1151) support education and childcare settings to help children develop, play and learn in healthy settings. The programme recognises and supports schools that are making a difference for their pupils. The Healthy Schools London programme supports schools to take a whole school approach to supporting pupil wellbeing across four themes:
 - healthy eating;
 - physical activity;
 - emotional health & wellbeing; and
 - Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHE)
- 1.3 The impact of COVID-19 on schools, children and young people and their families has been immense. All aspects of health and wellbeing for schools have suffered because of COVID-19 including:
 - **Healthy eating:** access to healthy foods, free school meals and the provision of food for vulnerable i.e. breakfast clubs, after school clubs;
 - **Physical activity:** activity levels will be reduced for most – not travelling to school, no break or lunch times, no PE lessons or extra curricula sports, compounded by the stay at home message;
 - **Personal Social Health Education:** online safety, understanding of how to keep healthy and safe (esp. with COVID-19), relationships – children and young people are not socialising;
 - **Emotional wellbeing and mental health:** anxiety, lack of social interaction, bereavement and grief, lack of routine, missed exams and worries about future prospects; and
 - **Practicalities of return to school;** schools need support to implement government guidance in relation to staggered drop off, timetable changes, hygiene, social distancing, testing, what to do if COVID symptoms emerge in school i.e. appropriate PPE.
- 1.4 Additionally, as they reopen for all London's children, schools will need to ensure that they can create an environment whereby:
 - pupils can access healthy safe food and drinks;
 - pupils can exercise and travel to and from school safely;
 - pupils' mental health issues related to COVID-19 are addressed and supported; and
 - pupils are supported in how to make safe healthy decisions about online safety, relationships, risky behaviours, violence, domestic abuse resulting from COVID-19 through delivery of tailored PSHE.

- 1.5 There are more pupils in London schools (1.3 million pupils in 2500 schools) and they are more overcrowded than all other regions in England. There is a bigger challenge for London schools to accommodate all children when schools begin to welcome back all pupils in light of current COVID-safe guidance.
- 1.6 Healthy Schools London is a mechanism for the Mayor to achieve many of the objectives laid out in his Health Inequalities Strategy (HIS) and Recovery Missions. In support of these strategic frameworks, HSL aims to improve health and wellbeing through:

Health element	Impact of COVID	Benefits of HSL response
Mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prolonged lockdown, lack of social contact/interaction, routine, structure and support provided by schools • Reliance on social media and internet to connect: risk of misinformation, exploitation, bullying • Many CYP will have been through traumatic experiences, bereavement and grief • Challenging home circumstances: poverty, domestic abuse, substance misuse, • Anxiety and stress about future studies, employment • Isolation, anxiety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HSL has worked closely with Thrive LDN and delivered Mental Health First Aid Train (MHFA) the Trainer training to HSL Borough Leads who have subsequently trained their schools in MHFA. HSL can explore delivering additional training to BLs tailored to the Covid-19 context who can then support schools directly. • Resources to support mental health and emotional wellbeing are being shared across the Network, including those such as the Good Thinking app funded by the Mayor to extend provision to secondary school-age children. Some Boroughs have already developed resources for schools that have been adapted for the COVID recovery. • This insights and analytical work will support HSL to define and identify Recovery priorities. • HSL will support the Mental Health Mission by facilitating sharing of learning and good practice in school and access to Borough Lead Network and schools (2200 schools.) • HSL is supporting the Cross-Cutting Principle work of the New Deal for Young People Mission which will support the most marginalised young people and provide them with a Mentor.
Physical activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence shows that PA levels among children and young people have been 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HSL works with borough leads to deliver and promote a range of interventions including the Daily Mile programme and is

	<p>greatly reduced during this period</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children & young people are not travelling to school, experiencing no break or lunch times, PE lessons and extra curricula sports • Stay home message will have impacted activity levels for the majority of CYP 	<p>supporting partners to develop and roll-out a COVID Safe approach to this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HSL will continue to coordinate and disseminate findings and good practice across the Network and to schools. • Facilitate sharing of best practice on physical activity lessons and initiatives
Healthy eating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With most CYP not in school, major issues with access to food, access to healthy foods, Free School Meals: problems with voucher scheme. Provision of food for vulnerable i.e. breakfast club, after school club, free school meals not being provided • Providing nutritious meals to pupils eligible for Free School Meals has been problematic. Many schools opted to join the voucher scheme which has been difficult for parents to access and spend the vouchers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HSL Borough Leads and schools support families to access free school meals • Sharing good practice and learning across the HSL Network. • Advice and guidelines cascaded on food and hand hygiene. • Close partnership working with Food Team and Equality and Fairness Team at GLA. • HSL is supporting the Healthy Food Healthy Weight Mission with developing interventions and engaging the workforce and children across 2200 schools.
Personal Social Health Education including Sex and Relationship, drugs and alcohol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in use of social media and internet. Online safety, understanding of how to keep healthy and safe (esp. with COVID-19), relationships – CYP not socialising. Issues in accessing services: sexual health, drug and alcohol advice due to closures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HSL coordinates and facilitates Borough Leads and schools to share best practice on how to empower CYP to make safe healthy decisions about online safety, relationships, risky behaviours, violence, domestic abuse, relationships and sex, drugs and alcohol resulting from COVID-19 • Hosting webinars and providing a channel and platform for training and compliance with statutory PSHE from Sept 2020/21.
Teacher wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anxiety about returning to schools and risk of infection. • Personal circumstances of staff to be considered and retain option for home working for those whome isolation is crucial • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HSL developed a dedicated section on the HSL website featuring resources and support for teacher wellbeing • Working collaboratively with Education and Youth Team to provide more support for teacher wellbeing.

Domestic violence, violence against women and girls and gang violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incidents of Domestic violence, violence against women and girls and gang violence have been increasing during lockdown but cases are more hidden. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting and supporting learning and best practice as schools are a key mechanism for identifying needs and ensuring referrals are made in a timely and appropriate manner.
Support for parenting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many parents are juggling home schooling with other commitments alongside ensuring that their families stay physically and mentally healthy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HSL is signposting to resources that can support parents. Many BLs are directly supporting families with food deliveries, daily/weekly emails HSL Team collates and disseminates good practice and support.
Child poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to lockdown, there has been an increase in numbers of vulnerable children and families and subsequently an increase in children living in poverty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HSL is supporting the Equality and Fairness Team (as part of Health in All Policies Approach) within CSP to explore rolling out a programme of guidance, advice and signposting to services that can support those families in need using school settings
Pupil voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With school closures CYP do not have structured mechanisms to have their views and voices heard. Black and minority ethnic groups, young carers, young people leaving care and those with pre-existing mental health conditions have been hardest hit of all. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HSL works with the Peer Outreach Team to deliver webinars and disseminate films and resources
Immunisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> London has some of the lowest take ups of immunisations in CYP across England. COVID-19 has meant that many non-essential health services ceased to operate and parents and CYP will be unaware or afraid to access immunisations. School based immunisations not taking place. Issue of catching up will be crucial to address. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HSL works with PHEL CYP lead and NHS England to promote and increase uptake of immunisations. HSL is a mechanism for encouraging schools to ensure that their pupils are up to date with immunisations. Currently working with PHEL School Nurse Practitioner Network. HSL and HEYL are supporting the Comms Plan to encourage awareness that school age vaccinations have re-started in Covid recovery. HSL has provided a digital platform to support partners to provide training to increase uptake of childhood immunisations, address vaccine

		hesitancy and look at the COVID-19 vaccine.
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- 1.7 Originally launched in April 2013, the programme has since gained the support of 27 London Boroughs which now have a local Healthy Schools Programme or equivalent local support for schools. 2199 (86%) London schools have registered to the HSL programme. Of these, 1276 schools have already achieved a Bronze Award, 756 have achieved a Silver Award and 325 a Gold Award.
- 1.8 The Mayor's HSL programme consists of a core, GLA-based team co-ordinating and supporting the work of Borough level leads (1.2 FTE). To augment the core GLA capacity, the GLA HSL Team is seeking to procure additional delivery support in the form of support to borough leads and schools.
- 1.9 This ADD provides authority to spend up to £45,000 to procure specialist support for the HSL team to inform a planned redesign of the programme based on insights and data gathered through the HSL schemes and to ensure future priorities are designed around the needs of London Boroughs and schools to ensure London's school-aged children are better supported throughout the recovery from the pandemic.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1 A comprehensive analysis of data and insights gathered and submitted by participants in the HSL programme. To support the redesign of the programme to ensure HSL participants and activities are addressing identified health and wellbeing issues resulting from Covid. This will be done by providing:
 - analysis of data and insights submitted by settings to the HSL programme to identify groups/areas most adversely affected by COVID;
 - Recommendations for measurable outcomes so that schools can evidence output and impacts;
 - data driven template policies and toolkits to support schools, teachers, parents and children throughout the Recovery Period (e.g., mental health and wellbeing policy, school food); and
 - Proposals to support the development of a framework for resetting of the programme.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1 A Health Inequalities Impact Assessment (HIIA) was conducted in March of 2013, prior to HSL's launch, to consider the impact of the programme on disadvantaged groups, who already suffer poorer health. The HIIA informed delivery of the HSL programme in order to minimise the risk of any potential negative impacts on groups with protected characteristics.
- 3.2 More recently, a health inequality mapping and participation analysis was conducted by the GLA Health Team to determine if the programme was having a positive effect on health inequalities. The analysis determined that London schools which have achieved the HSL Bronze award have a higher proportion of deprived pupils compared to schools which are not involved with the programme.
- 3.3 On average, schools that have achieved the Healthy Schools London Bronze award have 26% more pupils who are eligible for free school meals, looked after or are children of service personnel.

4. Other considerations

Key Risks and Issues

Risk description and potential impact	Assessment	Mitigation / Risk Response
Restricted capacity to provide support to Boroughs and schools Capacity in the GLA Health team has been limited due to vacancies and recruitment delays. In order to continue to support London Boroughs to work directly with schools, the GLA Team must ensure that they have the tools and skills required for this.	Impact: High Likelihood: High	The expenditure authorised by this ADD represents a mitigation response to this risk Providing support for Borough Leads to enable them to support schools more effectively will increase the commitment of Borough Leads supporting the Mayor's Healthy Schools London programme. Furthermore, the schools will have the tools they need to address the impacts of COVID-19 on the health and wellbeing of pupils, their families and staff.
Reduction in quality and rigour of the programme negatively affecting ongoing HSL delivery and impact of activities Without specialist support for programme delivery at school and Borough level, the current team will not be able to devote sufficient time to measuring impact and/or scope a full redesign of the programmes.	Impact: High Likelihood: Medium	By providing research and analytical support, the changes to the programme will be fact and data driven. Having effective evidence will inform a redesign to meet the needs of young Londoners in the context of London's recovery from the pandemic.

Links to Mayoral Strategies and Priorities

- 4.1 The HSL Programme supports the delivery of the Mayor's Health Inequalities Strategy as well as the response to the London Health Commission and the work of the London Health Board, which maintains mental health and adolescent resilience as one of its priorities. The HSL programme also supports the delivery of a variety of Mayoral priorities including the Mayor's Food strategy, Sports Strategy, Education and Youth Team programmes including London Schools for Success programme, TfL STARS programme, GLA Planning Team (Superzones) and Team London.
- 4.2 HSL supports the London Health and Care Vision priorities:
- reduce childhood obesity;
 - improve the emotional wellbeing of children and young Londoners;
 - improve mental health and progress towards zero suicides;
 - improve air quality;
 - improve tobacco control and reduce smoking; and

- reduce the prevalence and impact of violence.

4.3 HSL directly supports many of the Mayor's Recovery Missions including:

- **Healthy Food, Healthy Weight:** Work to support mission delivery in relation to malnutrition and obesity in London's schools i.e., supporting Water Only policies and the child obesity taskforce. Schools engaging in HSL that are meeting many health eating and drinking criteria
- **Mental Health and Wellbeing:** Building on Mental Health First Aid Training for HSL Borough Leads and schools, they can support this Mission and become wellbeing ambassadors
- **High Streets for all:** Build on work to establish school streets/active travel and continue support of TfL ad ban work as well as school superzones projects
- **Green New Deal:** opportunity to support the mission team in relating to encouraging active travel and access to green space to be physically active a
- **A New Deal for Young People:** Work with mission team to feed in young people's voices and support roll out of personal mentors
- **A robust safety Net:** Continue to build on work with welfare team where financial advice/guidance offered in schools. Also support families accessing support in relation to healthy start vouchers and free school meals (including those who are NRPF)
- **Building Stronger Communities:** work with the mission team in supporting young people within communities most adversely affected by COVID, including BAME and disabled Londoners. Hyperlocal support for seldom heard groups through community hubs which are developed based on local need.

Impact Assessments and Consultations

- 4.4 As mentioned in section 3 the HSL programme has undergone a Health Inequalities Impact Assessment and a health inequality mapping and participation analysis to ensure the programme does not negatively impact already disadvantaged groups. Additionally, the HSL programme was developed with extensive stakeholder consultation, involving boroughs' public health and education teams; teachers, headteachers, GLA colleagues and national government. This consultation work shaped the delivery model and helped to establish the necessary delivery networks. Stakeholder consultation continues to be an integral part of the programme's delivery.

Conflicts of interest

- 4.5 There are no conflicts of interest to note for any of the officers involved in the drafting of clearance of this decision form.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1 Approval is being sought for expenditure of up to £45,000 to procure specialist support for the HSL team to build local capacity in London Boroughs and schools, to tackle the impact of COVID-19 on health and wellbeing.
- 5.2 The expenditure will be funded from the 2020-21 'Healthy Schools London' programme budget, held within the Health Team

6. Planned delivery approach and next steps

- 6.1 Delivery support for the HSL programme will be delivered via external, expert support procured in line with GLA HR procedures. The anticipated timeline is as follows:

Activity	Timeline
Procurement of contract	March 2021
Announcement	March 2021
Delivery Start Date	March 2021
Main milestone: 1.1 Rapid evidence of outputs and impact review for HSL	March 2021
Main milestone1: examples of activities, policies, training etc. that mitigate impact of COVID and support wellbeing	March 2021
Main milestone 2: targeted support for groups/areas most adversely affected by COVID	March 2021
Main milestone 3: example measurable outcomes so that schools can evidence output and impacts	March 2021
Main milestone 4: template policies to meet COVID needs (e.g. mental health and wellbeing policy, school food)	March 2021
Final evaluation start and finish - self	March 2021
Delivery End Date	March 2021
Project Closure:	March 2021

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:

Alison Stafford has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures.

✓

Corporate Investment Board

This decision was agreed by the Corporate Investment Board on 1 March 2021.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL SERVICES:

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

Signature



Date

1 March 2021