

REQUEST FOR DIRECTOR DECISION – DD1366

Title: The London Ambitions Website – Enhancing Information, Advice and Guidance in London Schools

Executive Summary:

London's business sector recognises it has a significant role to play in addressing the gap between schools and employers. This approval will enable the GLA to progress the London Ambitions website project that will facilitate collaboration across the sectors. The objective is to simplify the engagement between the education and business sectors to ensure London's young people are better prepared for the world of work.

The London Ambitions website will create an online hub to host careers education programmes and materials, and to facilitate access to work experience, internship and apprenticeship opportunities provided by London's businesses.

Decision:

That the Executive Director approves:

1. Expenditure of £128,648 to meet the costs of developing the London Ambitions website project that will host careers education and work experience opportunities, simplifying the engagement between London's businesses, schools and colleges.
2. That the GLA enters into contract with MIME consulting to undertake this work.

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: Jeff Jacobs

Position: Executive Director Communities and Intelligence

Signature:

Date:

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 This DD supersedes approvals under DD917 and MD1221 which secured budget approval for the global city strand programme activities. The initial intention was to undertake a feasibility study and fund the Inspiresme Week 2014 project (however the latter was funded through the Mayor's Academies Programme budget). Through detailed discussions with London's stakeholders the GLA have developed the London Ambitions website project, and are no longer taking forward the feasibility study outlined in DD917.
- 1.2 The total cost for the London Ambitions project is £128,648 – this has been informed by a procurement process that was undertaken in April 2015 through which we have secured value for money (please see paragraph 1.6 regarding the procurement process).
- 1.3 GLA investment in the London Ambitions website supports four recommendations set out in the final report of the Mayor's Education Inquiry that seek to ensure all young Londoners are prepared for life and work in a global city. The objectives are to facilitate collaboration across the education and business sectors, ensuring the offer to young people reflects the needs of London's labour market and allows them to compete in London's more competitive labour market.
- 1.4 The London Enterprise Panel is in the process of developing a London-wide careers offer, which will set the standard for how London's schools and colleges meet their careers duty, with the objective of delivering a coordinated and cohesive offer to all young people. London Ambitions website sits within this offer.
 - We have seen a plethora of careers education related programmes and sites created by careers guidance companies. Some are endorsed by employers, others are not. Schools are feeling overwhelmed and struggle to make sense of all the offers. The London Ambitions website seeks to address these issues, simplifying the engagement between the education and business sectors by creating a searchable online hub that will: host employer endorsed careers education offers – which is searchable by subject area, key stage/year, location, type of careers education (e.g. employer visits, teacher placements, employer speakers etc.)
 - Host work experience, internships, traineeships and apprenticeship opportunities, including those created through the forthcoming European Structural Investment Fund programme
 - Provide the details of careers guidance leads in all London schools and colleges which will be accessible to employers signed up to the site
 - Facilitate the sharing of best practice in careers guidance in London
 - Start to inform where there are geographical gaps in provision (also highlighted as an issue)
 - Allow schools, colleges and employers to give feedback on the quality of the engagement across each sector
 - Allow school and colleges to give feedback on the quality of programmes
 - Integrate and complement other GLA initiatives working in this area.
- 1.5 Expenditure will enable the GLA to contract with a developer to:
 - Take forward the design and development of the web platform.
 - Undertake detailed user consultation, design and development of the platform

- Gather content
- Conduct user testing
- Secure training for GLA staff and users as part of the roll-out of the platform

1.6 The London Ambitions specification was published by TfL Procurement on 2 April 2015. Three bids were received and evaluated by three GLA Officers against the criteria published in the invitation to tender:

- Evidence of the organisation's experience in the type of exercise as an indicator of relative excellence of technical delivery.
- Staff experience and technical skills
- Proposed Implementation plan including methodology as regards how content will be gathered and the consulting with schools, colleges and businesses on the proposed functionality
- Value for money

1.7 MIME Consulting was selected as the preferred bidder.

1.8 Once approval is secured, MIME Consulting will work with its partner Applied Works to:

- Scope, design and build the platform - undertaking desk research to provide a snapshot of the range of online careers education, work experience and internship offers from London's businesses, available to young people from primary school age, up to 19 years.
- Source websites that have a similar objective to London Ambitions and assess how they could feed/host/provide a platform for London Ambitions
- Consult with a range of stakeholders on the proposed functionality and design of the London
- Use the information gathered during the consultation phase, deliver options for the design of the look and feel of the site (minimum of two)
- Gather the content to support the first and second phase launches of the site

Table 1: Proposed budget breakdown [maximum costs these may reduce following consultation]

Discovery phase: scoping, consultation and research	£23,333
Gathering content (phase 1 and 2)	£29,580
Site build, testing and launch (phase 1 and 2)	£75,735
Total	£128,648

1.9 Options for hosting and sustainability of the site will be explored through the consultation phase. We have emphasised during the project that we are looking for the best value site that will integrate within the existing 'careers education ecosystem'. Information from existing sites will be scraped into the portal where possible, and in turn information gathered as part of the London Ambitions research will feed other portals.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

2.1 The key objectives of the programme are to:

- Simplify the process of engagement between schools, colleges and employers of different sizes to improve young people's access to the opportunities provided by London's businesses.
- Increase the range of opportunities for young people and school leaders to learn directly from employers.
- Help London's schools and colleges understand London's current and future skills needs

- Provide a mechanism for sharing knowledge on what works – both showcased on the London Ambitions site but also pulled in from other sources e.g. Team London Pathways to Employment.
-
- Add value to existing offers

2.2 As a result we expect to see the following outcomes:

- More young people learning about the world of work directly from employers, thereby making better decisions about their education and training needs
- Teachers and governors feeling better informed about the local labour market, and more schools accessing the opportunities available to their students, resulting in a higher quality careers offer in London schools and colleges
- Employers reporting that London's young people are better prepared for the world of work

Milestones

2.3 It is anticipated design and development of the site will be carried out in two phases

- Phase 1 – delivery of the first iteration of the site containing 200 offers provided or supported by employers (End December)
- Phase 2 – delivery of the second iteration of the site containing and allowing functionality for schools to access work experience, internship and apprenticeship opportunities (end March 2016)

2.4 The overall ambition is for all London schools and colleges to use the site. However, we recognise the programme will need to be supported by a campaign; therefore our preliminary targets are as follows:

Year 1

- 50 schools (primary and secondary) and colleges access London Ambitions
- 200 offers from businesses uploaded onto the site in phase 1
- First iteration of work experience functionality added

Year 2

- 150 schools and colleges accessing London Ambitions
- ESF funded work experience, internship, traineeships and apprenticeship opportunities added (phase 2)

3. Equality comments

- 3.1 There are clear disparities in the current careers guidance offer in London schools and colleges. Under resourced schools already struggling to meet government targets are not prioritising careers guidance, and many are providing a limited offer, despite the careers duty.
- 3.2 The London labour market is complex and highly competitive. There are already barriers to entering certain professions and the pathways into training and education are unclear, and not always supported by employers. These factors put London's young people at a disadvantage; even more so if you take into account that many do not have the networks of those from more affluent backgrounds.

- 3.3 There are many opportunities for jobs in sectors identifying skills shortages such as those within the science, maths, and technology sectors. Young people from poorer backgrounds, BAME backgrounds and females are under-represented in many of these professions. The objective is to help address these factors and inequalities by simplifying engagement between the education and business sectors. The London Ambitions website will improving information available to schools and colleges on what is available and how to access those allowing careers leads to use the limited time they have to better inform and direct their students. Businesses will also be encouraged to increase the range of opportunities available to London schools, ensuring the offers are relevant and of high quality.

4. Other considerations

a) Key risks and issues

Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigation
Cost of website too expensive	High	Medium	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Options will be considered through the development phase. Break clauses will be built into the contract of the web developer
Schools do not use the site	High	Medium	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Campaign will be undertaken, which includes maximising opportunities through wider GLA school project comms and the LEP Careers Offer campaign Link with intermediaries, 14-19 partnerships etc.
Businesses do not engage	High	Medium	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Maximise links established through Business Backs Education Summit Link with intermediaries and key partners

b) Links to strategies and Mayoral and corporate priorities

The London Ambitions website is a key project within the Preparing Young People for Life and Work theme of the GLA Education Programme.

The project contributes to the London Enterprise Panel (LEP) Growth and Jobs strategy and will ensure attention is given to careers education and work experience opportunities that address identified skills shortages. The LEP is also in process of developing a London-wide careers offer, which will the standard for how London's schools and colleges meet their careers duty, with the objective of delivering a coordinated and cohesive offer to all young people.

The London Ambitions website sits within this offer, alongside the development of the European Structural Investment Fund (ESIF) Programme, which includes further support to schools, colleges and business. A Careers Clusters programme will facilitate sustained partnerships between schools, colleges, universities and businesses, with an emphasis on building the capacity of leadership teams, teachers and careers advisors, resulting in a more strategic approach to the development and delivery of careers education. The ESIF programme will also support SME's in London to develop high quality work experience, internships, and traineeship and apprenticeship opportunities.

It is expected the London Ambitions website will host the work experience, internship, and traineeship and apprenticeship opportunities created by SME's supported under the programme. Schools and colleges participating in the careers clusters will be encouraged to use the site as a core part of their strategies and as a mechanism for accessing opportunities created through the ESIF programme.

The London Ambitions website also aligns with the Team London, Pathways to Employment mapping project which will surface volunteering opportunities for young people in line with their career goals. It will also surface opportunities from corporate partners which are free at point of consumption for the school/young person and will aid their route to employment. This project will be done in collaboration with plotr in Q3-4 of 2015. We are working with the team to ensure both programmes support each other and intend to integrate these platforms technically, while also ensuring that our messaging is clear and consistent and we avoid duplication.

We will also work with the GLA IT and Web Development teams to secure technical advice and to also align with the new London.gov.uk change programme. This will include identifying whether the London.gov.uk is the appropriate host for the London Ambitions website.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1 The maximum cost of the proposed contract with 'MIME Consulting' for developing and building the London Ambitions website is £128,648, which will be funded from the C&I Directorate Minor Programme budget for 2015-16 (£59,000) and a budget carry forward from 2014-15 totalling £70,000, specifically from the Global Cities budget previously approved by DD917 and MD1221. The proposed carry forward is still subject to formal approval via the Authority's closure of accounts process and in the event the carry forward is not approved, the balance of costs will have to be contained within budget allocated to the Education & Youth Team in 2015-16.
- 5.2 It should be noted that there are likely to be ongoing maintenance costs with regards to the website. However, at this stage, these are currently being negotiated with the preferred contractor as well as other potential suppliers. There is also some uncertainty regarding who is to host the website after the launch. Once the details of the maintenance costs and the long-term host of the website have been established, this will be subject to the Authority's decision-making and budget processes.
- 5.3 Any changes to this proposal, including budgetary implications will be subject to further approval. All appropriate budget adjustments will be made.
- 5.4 The Education & Youth Team within the Communities & Intelligence Directorate will be responsible for managing this project and ensuring all activities and associated expenditure complies with the Authority's Financial Regulations, Contracts & Funding Code and Expenses & Benefits Framework.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1 The foregoing sections of this report indicated that:
 - 6.1.1 the decisions requested of the director fall 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 in Greater London; 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:

- pay due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people (further details on equalities are set out in section 3 above) and to the duty under section 149 of the 2010 Act to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation as well as to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not¹;
- 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 The approval to appoint MIME Consulting is sought retrospectively as the procurement exercise has been carried out in April 2015. From the information set out paragraphs 1.6 and 1.7 above the procurement appears to have been undertaken in accordance with the GLA's Contract and Funding Code. Accordingly the director should take account of this when considering whether to approve this report.

Officers must ensure that appropriate contract documentation is put in place and executed by MIME Consulting and the GLA before the commencement of the services.

6.3 Section 31(3)(b) of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 prohibits the GLA from incurring expenditure in providing any educational services which could be provided by a borough council or other public body. However, the Mayor is not prevented from incurring expenditure in co-operating with, facilitating or co-ordinating the activities of a borough council or other public body. From the information in this report the setting up of the London Ambitions website does not constitute the provision of education services, but instead has its aim of facilitating the engagement between Schools and business to ensure young people are prepared for the world of work. The role of the GLA in respect of schools is a co-operative, facilitative and co-ordinating one and is, therefore, permitted under the Act.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Procurement of contract [for externally delivered projects]	Feb 2015
Announcement [if applicable]	April 2015
Delivery Start Date [for project proposals]	May 2015
Evaluation start and finish (self):	June 2016
Delivery End Date [for project proposals]	tbc
Project Closure: [for project proposals]	tbc

Appendices and supporting papers: Invitation to Tender

¹ The protected characteristics and groups are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, gender, religion or belief, sexual orientation and marriage/ civil partnership status.

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:

Daisy Greenaway has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms that:

✓

Assistant Director/Head of Service:

Amanda Coyle 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.

✓

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES:

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

Signature

Date