

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2019

Title: Talk London Website Contract Extension

Executive Summary:

Talk London is an online research community of Londoners that supports City Hall in placing Londoners' needs at the centre of its strategies and programmes by involving citizens in meaningful research, debate and consultation.

DD1013 approved the competitive procurement process and award of contract to a service provider for hosting, functional development and technical support for the Talk London website for the period between September 13 till August 16 and expenditure of up to £117,000. A contract was undertaken with an agency to provide hosting and support services for the website until end August 2016. The contract put in place included an option to extend for 2 further years.

This decision proposes the approval of expenditure to fund the service for a one-year period to August 2017, and to use the existing facility to extend the contract for a further year.

Decision:

That the Assistant Director of the Intelligence Unit approves expenditure of up to £50,000 for Talk London hosting and support services and extension of the contract with Freshminds Ltd to August 2017.

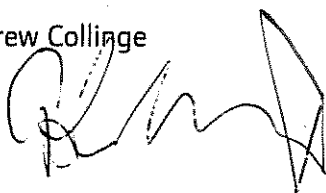
AUTHORISING ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/HEAD OF UNIT:

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: Andrew Collinge

Signature:



Position: Assistant Director of Intelligence and Analysis

Date: 17/8/16.

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 Talk London is an online research community of Londoners that supports City Hall in placing Londoners' needs at the centre of its strategies and programmes by involving citizens in meaningful research, debate and consultation. A contract was undertaken with an agency to provide hosting and support services for the website until end August 2016. We now wish to extend the contract for a further year, as provided within the contract.
- 1.2 Approval to deliver and fund Talk London was provided by Director Decisions 526 and 684. Fresh Networks Global Limited ("Freshminds") was commissioned via a competitive bid process to work with the GLA to design the solution for the proposition; to develop the functional specification and technical architecture for the site.
- 1.3 Approval was subsequently received to commission Freshminds to provide social media and community management services up to September 2012 and web hosting of the site until end March 2013 (DD932).
- 1.4 Approval was awarded to extend those contracting arrangements until the end of August 2013 in order to ensure continuity of service delivery while a full competitive tender process was followed (DD1036).
- 1.5 DD1013 provided Director approval for a competitive OJEU level procurement process and award of contract to a service provider for hosting, functional development and technical support for the Talk London website for the period September 2013 until the end of August 2016. The contract was implemented for the same period, but also included provision to extend the contract for a further two years.
- 1.6 Officers now wish to extend the contract for Talk London hosting and support services for a further year, to end August 2017. The value of the contract extension is £50,000.
- 1.7 Officers will liaise with Transport for London Procurement to complete the necessary Form for Variation, required to extend the contract for a year.
- 1.8 The total cost of related decisions is set out below:

Original Contract Value – 3 years	Up to £117,000
Extension Value – 1 year	Up to £50,000

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

Objective

- 2.1 Via Transport for London Procurement, to extend the contracting arrangements for web hosting, functional development and technical support for the Talk London website.

Outcome

- 2.2 Talk London continues to provide a platform for research and consultation activities at City Hall.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1 The Greater London Authority has an obligation under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty to consider how its policies and decisions affect people who are protected under the act. Protected characteristics include age, disability, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and religion or belief. Talk London allows City Hall to place Londoners' needs at the centre of its strategies and programmes by involving citizens in meaningful research, debate and consultation about how to improve the capital. By collecting demographic information from Talk London community members, we can understand any differences in perceptions and experiences among specific groups and give due consideration to how best to meet their needs.

4. Other considerations

- 4.1 City Hall utilises the Talk London community for specific research and consultation activities each month, at no additional cost to the authority. If the platform is unavailable for use the GLA would have to pay for external market research agency services. In addition, the community has more than 30,000 members who expect the website to remain available as a channel to discuss London issues with each other and with City Hall. There is reputational risk to the Mayor and GLA should this platform fail to remain open for public use. Therefore, there is a requirement for this platform to remain available.
- 4.2 The Mayor of London has stated that he wants to lead the most engaged, transparent administration seen at City Hall. The Talk London online research community allows the GLA to ensure that we design strategies, policies, interventions and services that delivers maximum social impact.
- 4.3 Officers are liaising with staff in the Digital Team to consider bringing in house Talk London hosting and development services. This work is at a scoping stage, and therefore a one-year extension is required at the moment. Whilst the preference is that services are brought in-house, should discussions conclude that the best solution is to use an external provider, a new procurement will take place in time for September 2017 contracting.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1 Approval is being sought to extend the present contracting arrangements with the service provider for hosting, functional development and technical support services for the Talk London website for an additional year to the end of 31 August 2017. DD1013 approved the competitive procurement process to the end of August 2016 with provision to extend for a further two years.
- 5.2 The value of the contract extension is £50,000 for a year (for the period to end of August 2017) and will be funded from the 2016-17 Consultation Budget (GC.0220.006.002-Opinion Research) held within the Intelligence Unit.

6. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Form of Variation signed:	August 2016
Start Date:	September 2016
End Date:	End August 2016

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:**

Christine Wingfield has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms that the Finance and –if relevant- Legal teams have commented on this proposal as required, and this decision reflects their comments.

HEAD OF FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE:

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

Signature:



Date:

17-08-16