

# MDA No.: 1864

## Title: State of London Debate Consultation

### 1. Executive Summary

1.1 At the Annual meeting on 1 May 2013 the Assembly resolved:

*That authority be delegated to Chairs of all ordinary committees and sub-committees to respond on the relevant committee or sub-committee's behalf, following consultation with the lead Members of the party Groups on the committee or sub-committee, where it is consulted on issues by organisations and there is insufficient time to consider the consultation at a committee meeting.*

1.2 Following consultation with the Deputy Chair and party Group Lead Members, the Chairman is asked to agree the Committee's response to the consultation on the State of London Debate, as attached at **Appendix 1**.

### 2. Decision

2.1 **That the GLA Oversight Committee's response to the State of London Debate consultation be agreed.**

#### Assembly Member

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:**



**Printed Name:** Emma Best AM, Chairman of the GLA Oversight Committee

**Date:** 9 June 2026

### **3. Decision by an Assembly Member under Delegated Authority**

#### **Background and proposed next steps:**

- 3.1 The terms of reference of the GLA Oversight Committee requires the Committee to provide a response from the Assembly on consultations for the arrangements for the State of London Debate.
- 3.2 On 24 April 2026 the Senior Manager, Events for London, wrote to the Committee to consult Members on arrangements for the State of London Debate 2026. This letter is attached as **Annex 1**.
- 3.3 The exercise of delegated authority approving the letter to the Head of Events for London on the arrangements for the State of London Debate 2026 will be formally noted at the GLA Oversight Committee's next appropriate meeting.

#### **Confirmation that appropriate delegated authority exists for this decision:**

Signature (Committee Services):

Printed Name: Nikoleta Kemp, Principal Committee Manager

Date: 9 June 2026

#### **Financial Implications: NOT REQUIRED**

Note: Finance comments and signature are required only where there are financial implications arising or the potential for financial implications.

Signature (Finance): Not Required

Printed Name:

Date:

#### **Legal Implications:**

The Chairman of the GLA Oversight Committee has the power to make the decision set out in this report.

Signature (Legal):



Printed Name: Rory McKenna

Date: 9 June 2026

Email: rory.mckenna@london.gov.uk

#### **Supporting Detail / List of Consultees:**

- *Bassam Mahfouz AM (Deputy Chair)*
- *Hina Bokhari OBE AM*
- *Caroline Russell AM*

- *Keith Prince AM*

#### **4. Public Access to Information**

- 4.1 Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the FoIA, or the EIR and will be made available on the GLA Website, usually within one working day of approval.
- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 **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, until what date:

##### **Part 2 – Sensitive Information:**

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under FoIA or EIR should be included in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form? NO

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#### **Lead Officer / Author**

Signature: Paul Goodchild

Printed Name: Paul Goodchild

Job Title: Committee Services Manager

Date: 5 June 2026

#### **Countersigned by Executive Director:**

Signature:



Printed Name: Helen Ewen, Executive Director – Assembly Secretariat

Date: 9 June 2026



**Bassam Mahfouz AM**  
**Chair of the GLA Oversight Committee**

Kim Hobbs  
Senior Manager, Events for London  
Greater London Authority

(Sent by email)

5 May 2026

Dear Kim,

**GLA Oversight Committee – State of London Debate Consultation**

Thank you for your letter dated 24 April 2026, consulting the London Assembly – through the GLA Oversight Committee - on the proposed plans for the next State of London Debate (SOLD) on Wednesday 3 June 2026.

We note that the proposed venue for the event should be kept confidential at this stage, but the Committee would like the opportunity to review and discuss the security arrangements for the event in due course as we have done in previous years.

Some Assembly Members have previously questioned the choice of James O’Brien as chair for the event and in our consultation response on the SOLD in 2025 we asked for more engagement with the GLA Oversight Committee on future selections for this role.

We understand that the selection of the chair is ultimately a matter for the Mayor. However, as concerns have previously been raised by some Assembly Members regarding Mr O’Brien’s impartiality, the Committee would like clarification on the following points:

- What appraisal was made by the Events team of the Chair in relation to the 2025 SOLD?
- What criteria were used to analyse the expressions of interest from media agencies?
- How long is the contact with the successful media partner, LBC?

Please send your response to Paul Goodchild, Committee Services Manager  
([paul.goodchild@london.gov.uk](mailto:paul.goodchild@london.gov.uk)).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bassam'.

**Bassam Mahfouz AM**  
**Chair of the GLA Oversight Committee**

# GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

Kim Hobbs  
Senior Manager, Events for London  
Email: [kim.hobbs@london.gov.uk](mailto:kim.hobbs@london.gov.uk)

Bassam Mahfouz AM  
Chairman of the GLA Oversight Committee

24 April 2026

Dear Assembly Member Mahfouz,

## **Oversight Committee – State of London Debate (SOLD)**

I am writing to provide the Committee with an update on the proposed plans for the next State of London Debate (SOLD).

As you're aware, in accordance with the Greater London Authority Act 1999 (GLA Act), the Mayor determines the form and procedures of SOLD, which must take place in either April, May or June, but not within a month before or after People's Question Time. The date proposed to hold the next SOLD on **Wednesday 3 June 2026**.

The proposed venue for the event is the **O2 Indigo**, which has appropriate security facilities, is easily accessible, and has hosted this event successfully for many years. Whilst this venue has historically hosted SOLD, we would still ask members to refrain from sharing this detail publicly until tickets are issued to attendees, to support the wider security arrangements of this event and all its participants.

An Expressions of Interest was requested from three media agencies (BBC, ITN and LBC) to pitch to be the media partner for SOLD, outlining the promotional benefits they could bring. Following this process, LBC was successful in their bid and put forward **James O'Brien** as chair for the event, which we propose to accept.

In line with statutory requirements, we will need to begin advertising the event one month prior. Accordingly, we would welcome any comments or feedback by **5pm on Monday 4 May 2026**.

Yours sincerely,



Kim Hobbs  
Senior Manager, Events for London