

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2063

Title: First Steps Property Portal Contract Extension

Executive Summary:

Under the current terms of the First Steps Property Portal Contract between GLA and Share to Buy, the service is due to expire on 31 March 2017. The estimated timeframe for procuring and implementing a new service that reflects current Mayoral priorities is 12 months.

Approval is therefore sought to use the contract variation powers within the First Steps Property Portal Contract to extend the service by 15 months to 30 June 2018. The proposed extension incorporates an initial 12 month period to 31 March 2018 along with the option to continue for a further 3 months as contingency.

Decision:

That the Assistant Director of Programme Policy and Services approves the use of the contract variation powers within the First Steps Property Portal Contract to extend the service to 30 June 2018 on existing terms and at no cost to the GLA.

AUTHOURISING 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: Jamie Ratcliff

Signature: 

Position: Assistant Director of Programme Policy and Services

Date: 22/12/16

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 The First Steps Property Portal was established under the previous Mayor; its purpose being to provide a pan-london Portal for Londoners on low to middle incomes seeking to access shared ownership and other properties offered on intermediate, sub market terms.
- 1.2 Share to Buy successfully bid to provide the First Steps Portal service when it was procured in early 2013 to deliver the First Steps Portal service from 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2016 at nil cost to the GLA. The service is provided on a concessionary basis to housing providers but is funded by fees accumulated from additional marketing activities offered to housing providers by Share to Buy.
- 1.3 To ensure continuity of service for Londoners and certainty for Housing Providers and Share to Buy, prior to the 2016 London Mayoral election the service was extended through to March 2017 in line with Assistant Director Decision 306.
- 1.4 The First Steps Portal has been a success with over 180,000 users registered since its launch. In the period 1st July – 30th September 2016 there were over 15,000 new registrations and over 41,700 property enquiries. In order to supplement the service Share to Buy hold bi-annual Home Show events where home seekers interested in shared ownership and other intermediate housing options are provided with the opportunity to meet housing providers and register their interest in person.
- 1.5 The First Steps Portal Contract expires on 31st March 2017 and the estimated timeframe for procuring and implementing a new service that reflects current Mayoral priorities is 12 months. Given this timeframe it is approval is sought to use the contract variation powers within the First Steps Property Portal Contract to extend the service by 15 months to 30 June 2018. The proposed extension incorporates an initial 12 month period to 31 March 2018 along with the option to continue for a further 3 months as contingency.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1 The objective of this Assistant Directors Decision is to agree an extension of the existing First Steps contract to June 2018.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1 The GLA has taken appropriate measures to ensure there are no potential negative impacts as a result of this decision on those with protected characteristics. Those with protected characteristics will gain from the positive benefits of the First Steps Portal, and there will be equality in accessibility to participate in the delivery and benefit from the portal without discrimination.

4. Other considerations

a) key risks and issues

The following risks and issues were identified:

- Damage to the GLA reputation as a result of decrease in success rate
- Not achieving stakeholder buy-in from the sector

b) links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

The current London Housing Strategy includes targets for the number of shared ownership homes delivered in the capital to be doubled by 2020, and doubled again by 2025, helping 250,000 Londoners into home ownership.

c) impact assessments and consultations

Internal and external stakeholders have been consulted on the extension of this contract.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1. This is an internet based service that provides property details to prospective shared ownership purchasers and tenants. That fact that it is provided at no cost to the GLA makes it good value. There seems to be no financial reason to not extend the contract.
- 5.2. The decision to extend this contract is on the same basis as MD1134 at nil-cost to the GLA.

6. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Finalise contract extension	December 2016
Procure provider for Homes For Londoners Property Portal	January 2017- March 2018
Launch Homes for Londoners Property Portal	April-June 2018

Appendices and supporting papers: none

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:**

Eleanor Byrne 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.

Corporate Investment Board:

This decision will be reported to the Corporate Investment Board on 9 January 2017.

HEAD OF FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE:

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

Signature:



Date:

22.12.16