

# GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

## REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2107

### Title: Research on 16-18 skills provision in London

#### Executive Summary:

In his manifesto, the Mayor committed to seek a devolution deal over further education which recognises the strategic importance of a London-wide approach to further education (FE), aligned with the needs of employers and students. This includes a specific call for the devolution of further education funding for 16-18 year olds to create high-performing colleges that meet the needs of London's economy and help to reduce youth unemployment.

To help the Mayor to make the case for devolution of the 16-18 Department for Education budget, a contractor will be sought through a procurement process to undertake research to inform the evidence base and present the rationale to negotiate with government. The proposed research will cover study and progression patterns for London learners at and below Level 3 and will also help to inform policy on 16-18 skills provision in the London Skills Strategy.

#### Decision:

That the Assistant Director of Economic and Business Policy approves expenditure of up to £40,000 on a research project, for which external consultancy will be sought via a procurement process, to assist the Mayor to make a case for devolution of the 16-18 Department for Education budget and also to help inform policy on 16-18 skills provision in the London Skills Strategy.

#### 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:** Mark Kleinman

**Position:** Assistant Director, Economic and Business Policy

**Signature:** 

**Date:** 18/4/17

## **PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE**

### **Decision required – supporting report**

#### **1. Introduction and background**

In his manifesto, the Mayor committed to lead a new skills agenda which will prepare young Londoners for life and work in a global city and foster engagement and build resilience among London's young people. The Mayor also committed to seek a devolution deal over further education which recognises the strategic importance of a London-wide approach to further education (FE), aligned with the needs of employers and students. This includes a specific call for the devolution of further education funding for 16–18 year olds to create high-performing colleges that meet the needs of London's economy and help to reduce youth unemployment.

To help the Mayor to make the case for devolution and/ or greater strategic influence of the 16-18 DfE budget, research will be undertaken to help inform and develop the evidence base and present a robust rationale to negotiate with government. The proposed research will also help to inform policy thinking to improve outcomes in 16-18 provision in the London Skills Strategy.

A specialist contractor will be sought via a procurement process to conduct the research.

#### **2. Objectives and expected outcomes**

The objective of the research is to develop further the evidence base for 16-18 provision in London from which practical recommendations or asks of government can be drawn.

The aim is to inform London government's policy position on how the 16-18 skills and education landscape could be reformed in London to deliver improved learning and employment outcomes for young Londoners.

The research findings will inform the London Skills Strategy and influence government policy with the aim of improving participation and success rates, and the progression of young Londoners into further education, training, apprenticeships or employment that fulfils labour market need.

The research is also expected:

- To align current Sector Subject Areas under the proposed 15 technical education routes outlined in the government's post-16 Skills Plan.
- To inform London's policy position on how the government's proposed 'transition year' could be delivered to improve outcomes and progression pathways for young people leaving school without 5 A\*-C GCSEs and those with complex needs including SEND/ vulnerable learners.
- To explore the implications of the government's policy requirement - that students who have not achieved a good pass in English and/ or maths GCSE by age 16 must continue to work towards achieving these qualifications as a condition of student places being funded.
- To provide evidence on study and progression patterns for London learners at and below Level 3  
Including:
  - Progression into further academic learning
  - Progression into further technical learning (including apprenticeships)
  - Re-sit rates for qualifications
  - Drop-out rates from different types of courses and different learning settings

The expected outputs of this research are expected to be:

- A report assessing the current landscape of provision for 16-18 London learners, including:
  - A map of provision across the capital and beyond.
  - A set of recommendations for skills and education providers, London government and central government.
- A presentation summarising the key findings and recommendations of the report.
- A road map for implementation of the recommendations.

### **3. Equality comments**

It is expected that the recommendations from the research commission will give consideration to how skills policy and provision in London better addresses the needs of different groups in the capital including those from different ethnic groups, BAME, gender differences, disabilities and learning difficulties.

### **4. Other considerations**

#### a) Key risks and issues

- i. The timeframe for producing the research is quite tight and if there is slippage in tendering the research, this could result in delays to input into the London Skills Strategy. A research plan is being developed to ensure the scope is focused on delivering the objective within the timeframe suggested. A research project team has also been set up to include key officers in the GLA and London Councils including the Skills Strategy lead.
- ii. Access to data or data limitations could result in gaps in the research commission. Work is underway to explore accessing a data sharing agreement with government within the given timeframe. Other routes to commissioning data are also being explored.

#### b) Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

The research links to several of the Mayor's manifesto commitments including to:

- Develop a city-wide, strategic approach to skills, identifying gaps in provision.
- Seek a devolution deal over further education which recognises the strategic importance of a London-wide approach to FE, aligned with the needs of employers and students; [and call for the devolution of further education funding for 16-18 year olds and adults to create high-performing colleges that meet the needs of London's economy and help to reduce youth unemployment.]
- Support the development of, and protect schemes which expand opportunities for people with disabilities to work and gain skills.

The findings of the proposed research will help to inform the development of a post-16 London Skills and Education Strategy ahead of devolution of the Adult Education Budget to the Mayor in 2019/20.

#### c) Impact assessments and consultations

GLA officers have consulted on the aims and scope of the proposed research with the GLA's Education and Youth Team and London Councils who will each part-fund the research. The Economic and Business Policy Team is working closely with officers from each of these teams/ organisations to help inform the basis of the specification which will be put out to tender.

**5. Financial comments**

5.1 The total estimated gross cost of this research project is £40,000 and the net cost to the GLA will be £30,000. The balance of £10,000 will be funded via income from London Councils. The GLA's contribution will be met from the Skills Devolution (£20,000) and the Education & Youth's Research & Consultancy (£10,000) budgets for 2017-18.

**6. Legal Comments**

*Not applicable*

**7. Planned delivery approach and next steps**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Tender specification completed	April 2017
Procurement commences	Early May 2017
Tendering deadline	End May 2017
Contractor in place	June 2017
Work commences	June 2017
Research complete	September 2017

**Appendices and supporting papers:**

N/A

**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? YES**

If YES, for what reason:

Publication would undermine the ability to complete a procurement process by revealing the full funding that will be available for the research, which is to be contracted out.

Until what date: 8<sup>th</sup> June.

**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:**

Forogh Rahmani 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:**

The Corporate Investment Board reviewed this proposal on 18 April 2017

**HEAD OF FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE:**

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

Signature:

PP

T Sonoville

Date:

18/4/17

