

REQUEST FOR DIRECTOR DECISION – DD1192

Title: New Schools for London

Executive Summary:

This paper requests approval to allocate £85,000 for the New Schools for London unit (NSL) for the 2014-15 financial year so that it can continue to deliver the Mayoral education commitments relating to Free Schools.

Decision:

That the Executive Director approves expenditure of up to £85k to meet the costs of a one-year fixed term contract for a Grade 11 post and for marketing materials for the New Schools for London unit (NSL) for the 2014-15 financial year.

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 for Communities and Intelligence

Signature:

Date: 9 April 2014

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

1.1 New Schools London funding is required to meet the electoral commitment to provide GLA Group land for 10 new schools and relates to the Education Inquiry recommendations launched in October 2012. NSL was announced by the Mayor in October 2012 at the launch of the Education Inquiry recommendations. Agency resource has been used in 2012/13 and 2013/14 to define this proposition for the GLA and commence work on delivering the project.

1.2 Activity on the 10-site commitment is progressing well and based on current projections the target will be met. One site has been delivered (Barking Riverside), and one further site is currently being used as a temporary solution for a new Free School (East London Science School at Three Mills). Several MOPAC sites have been bid for by the Education Funding Agency and discussions are advanced. Two sites on the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park have been agreed in principle with the LLDC. Advanced discussions are also taking place on several other GLA-owned sites for both permanent and temporary school premises. We continue to audit the estates of the other Functional Bodies.

1.3 Commercial sensitivity prevents us listing many of the specific sites at this stage. However based on current projections the target will be met. To deliver the Mayoral 10-site commitment, at a minimum the GLA needs to continue negotiations on the sites currently under discussion.

1.4 In addition to the site-specific activity outlined above, since the establishment of New Schools for London in cadre form in October 2012:

- Many new school groups have been given help and advice on site and planning issues;
- Several organisations have been encouraged to establish new schools;
- Developers have been encouraged to incorporate new schools into their developments;
- The London Plan has been amended to support the establishment of new schools;
- A London Schools Atlas – detailing population projections, school places and school performance data – has been developed and launched;
- A Business Plan with a delivery timetable has been drafted.

Budget Allocations and Programme Summary

1.6 Funding is sought to resource the NSL with one full time senior project manager (Grade 11 - £60k salary plus on costs) to deliver the manifesto commitments.

1.7 The post will be complimented with a programme budget of £16k. This will be utilised to fund specialist property services to ensure any GLA sites can be developed for Free Schools prior to any public announcement, and cover: marketing collateral to stimulate developer interest in Free Schools within larger redevelopment sites in London; trade show and conference attendance; and engagement costs (such as for holding round table events).

1.8 Delivering the 10-site commitment will require some small resource from the following teams: Strategic Projects & Property; Planning; Communications; and Housing & Land. This can be absorbed within existing budgets.

2. Other considerations

a) Key Risks and Issues

- Reputational damage: The funding sought will deliver the manifesto commitment to provide GLA Group land for 10 new schools; this is in addition to the Education Inquiry recommendations. Significantly scaling down this proposed budget risks damaging the reputation of the Mayor's widely publicised role in supporting new schools across London.
- Financial mismanagement: All budgets will be subject to the annual budget process and officers will ensure full compliance with the GLA's Financial Regulations, Expenses & Benefits Framework, Contracts & Funding Code and Funding Agreement toolkit (wherever applicable).

b) Links to strategies and Mayoral and corporate priorities

This is related to Education Inquiry recommendations below.

- Recommendation 10 of the Mayor's Education Inquiry on school data;
- Recommendation 11 on playing a more strategic role in supporting Free School developments in London;
- Recommendation 12 on innovative solutions to the schools places crisis.

c) Impact Assessments and Consultations

The Education Inquiry was widely consulted on during the period Oct 2011- 2012

3. Financial comments

- 3.1 Approval is being sought for the creation of a one-year fixed term contract post (indicative grade 11) and the procurement of consultancy / marketing services for the New Schools for London Unit for the 2014-15 financial-year.
- 3.2 A grade 11 post on the GLA Salary Scales equates to approximately £69,000 (including on-costs) leaving a balance of £16,000 to fund the proposed consultancy and marketing services; thus making a total cost of £85,000 for this initiative. This initiative will be funded from the 'New Schools for London' budget held within the Health & Communities Unit and approved as part of the 2014-15 budget process.
- 3.3 Any changes to this proposal, including budgetary implications will be subject to further approval via the Authority's decision-making process. All appropriate budget adjustments will be made.
- 3.4 Officers within the Health & Communities will be responsible for managing this initiative and ensuring that all activities and expenditure comply with the Authority's Financial Regulations, Contracts & Funding Code, Expenses & Benefits Framework, and in relation to the post creation, the GLA's HR recruitment and selections policies.

4. Legal Comments

- 4.1 Sections 1 – 3 of this report indicate that 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 social development in Greater London and have been formulated taking account of the Authority's related statutory duties to:

- (a) pay due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people;
- (b) 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
- (c) consult with appropriate bodies.

4.2 Officers must ensure that they comply fully with all GLA HR/Head of Paid Service protocols in respect of their staffing proposals, in particular the need to gain all necessary approvals for the creation of any new posts.

5. Next steps

Activity	Timeline
Recruitment to [a one-year fixed term] post to progress the Mayoral commitment relating to the 10 Free schools sites	Q1 2014/15
With approved programme budget, completion of project planning, commissioning and activity to implement the Education programme based on the Delivery Plan milestones.	As per Education Programme Delivery Plan

6. 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

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:

Amanda Coyle 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