

# GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

## REQUEST FOR DIRECTOR DECISION – DD2629

### Online Survey Software

#### Executive summary:

Approval is sought by the Executive Director of Strategy and Communications to procure an online survey software licence, for a period of four years. This contract will provide software that will be used by teams throughout the GLA, in order to create and host online surveys. These surveys will deliver research that supports effective and impactful policymaking, and the development of strategies and programmes, at City Hall.

This decision form requests £80,000 expenditure on the software for a four-year period.

#### Decision:

That the Executive Director of Strategy and Communications approves expenditure of up to £80,000 on an online survey software licence that will run from September 2023 to September 2027.

#### 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:** Niran Mothada

**Position:** Executive Director, Strategy and Communications

**Signature:**



**Date:**

4 May 2023

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

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

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

- 1.1. The Opinion Research team provides evidence and insight into public opinion and behaviours to inform City Hall strategies, policies, programmes and business priorities. With other teams at the GLA, it regularly conducts online surveys to capture insights from Londoners and stakeholders. These surveys can range from large public consultations to feedback from event attendees.
- 1.2. Online surveys are the main tool for conducting consultations and engagement on Talk London, City Hall's online community. Procuring an online survey software licence is therefore essential for the ongoing operation of Talk London.
- 1.3. In 2019, the GLA procured online survey software on a three-year licence to allow the GLA to create and host online surveys. The licence was extended for an additional year, until September 2023. Expenditure of £50,000 was approved under ADD2329.
- 1.4. We now seek approval to commission a new four-year licence for online survey software, running from September 2023 to September 2027. This work will be procured in accordance with the Contracts and Funding Code.

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

- 2.1. The objectives of this decision are:
  - to commission an online survey software provider to enable teams throughout the GLA to conduct online surveys
  - to allow the GLA to conduct online engagement and consultation, via the integration of the online survey software into Talk London.
- 2.2. The expected outcome of this decision is that the views and experiences of Londoners and stakeholders can help inform policy and decision-making at City Hall.

#### **3. Equality comments**

- 3.1. The GLA is required, in the exercise of its functions, to have due regard to the need to:
  - eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010
  - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
  - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 3.2. The GLA 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. By carrying out surveys, the GLA can engage a broad range of demographic and socio-economic groups in research and engagement. The online survey software will allow the GLA to conduct research and engagement that is inclusive of all Londoners. It will allow the GLA to understand any differences in perceptions and experiences among these groups of Londoners; and to give due consideration to how best to

meet their needs. The online survey software will help ensure policy teams and the Mayor use insights from Londoners in the development of GLA policies and programmes. City Hall takes various other approaches to engage Londoners who are not online.

#### **4. Other considerations**

##### Key risks and issues

- 4.1. A risk is that the online software does not provide the required functionality and user experience that is needed for online surveys created by the GLA – for example, the question types and the level of built-in analysis and reporting available. The technical evaluation assessment will require tendering suppliers to demonstrate that their software meets the minimum requirements set by the GLA. As per Transport for London's (TfL's) procurement advice, only potential suppliers that can show they can meet these technical requirements will be invited to take part in the tender process.
- 4.2. A risk is that the online survey software cannot be integrated on the Talk London platform. The technical evaluation assessment will require tendering suppliers to demonstrate that their software meets the minimum technical requirements for integrating on Talk London.
- 4.3. The technical evaluation assessment will require tendering suppliers to demonstrate that their online survey software meets minimum data protect requirements set by the GLA. This includes demonstrating that personal data collected from surveys is encrypted and stored securely and that different and appropriate levels of secure access to the data are allowed.

##### Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

- 4.4. In his 2021 manifesto, the Mayor stated he wants to build stronger communities and is determined to hear from Londoners directly. Through online engagement activities, we enable Londoners to participate in the design, development and delivery of strategies, policies and programmes, thereby ensuring the Mayor's priorities for London are informed by the needs of Londoners.
- 4.5. Sections 3 and 6 set out the GLA's obligations in relation to the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty, and compliance with the GLA's statutory duties. To this end, the online survey software will ensure the GLA can engage a broad range of people in research and engagement that informs the development of strategies, policies and programmes.

##### Consultations and impact assessments

- 4.6. Being able to conduct surveys with a variety of Londoners will ensure that the GLA involves a broad constituency of people in our work. Consultation helps the GLA to make better-informed decisions, and makes us more accountable to the public.

##### Declarations of interest

- 4.7. There are no conflicts of interest to note for any of the officers involved in the drafting or clearance of this decision form.

#### **5. Financial comments**

- 5.1. Approval is sought for expenditure of up to £80,000. The expenditure will be funded from the existing Opinion Research and Statistics team budget, held within the City Intelligence Unit, which is part of the Strategy and Communications directorate. The contract will be awarded via a competitive tender process and will last four years, from September 2023 to September 2027. The requested expenditure approval is based on the cost of the most recent one-year extension of the online survey software currently used by the GLA.

5.2. There is sufficient budget in this financial year to cover the annual payment; in subsequent years, this will represent a commitment that will be confirmed through the annual budgeting processes and therefore cannot be guaranteed. As a mitigation, the contract should include the standard break clauses to allow the GLA to exit the contract if necessary.

## **6. Legal comments**

6.1. The foregoing sections of this report indicate that the decisions requested of the Executive Director of Strategy and Communications concern the exercise of the GLA's general powers, falling within the GLA's statutory powers to do such things considered to further, or that are facilitative of or conducive or incidental to, the promotion of economic development and wealth creation, social development or improvement of the environment, in Greater London.

6.2. In implementing the proposals in respect of which a decision is sought, officers should comply with the GLA's related statutory duties to:

- pay due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people
- 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
- consult with appropriate bodies.

6.3. In taking the decisions requested, as noted in section 3, above, the Executive Director of Strategy and Communications must have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, namely the need to: eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010; advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (race, disability, age, sex, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, and gender reassignment) and persons who do not share it; and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. To this end, the Executive Director of Strategy and Communications should have particular regard to section 3 (above) of this report.

6.4. Section 1 of this report indicates that part of the sought budget will amount to the provision of payment for services. Officers must ensure that the funding is distributed fairly; transparently; in accordance with the GLA's equality policy and subsidy control rules; and in a manner that affords value for money in accordance with the GLA Contracts and Funding Code. Officers must ensure that an appropriate funding agreement is put in place and executed by the GLA and the recipient before any commitment to funding is made.

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

7.1. TfL Procurement and Commercial has been informed of this proposal. We will follow a competitive tender process via a request for quotation among online survey software suppliers. Relevant internal stakeholders, including Talk London, Digital Experience Unit and Information Governance, will be consulted ahead of the decision.

7.2. The Opinion Research team will manage the contract.

7.3. The delivery schedule is detailed below:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Procurement of contract	May 2023
Contract award	August 2023

Delivery start date	September 2023
Delivery end date	September 2027

**Appendices and supporting papers:**

None

**Public access to information**

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) 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 be published either 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? YES**

If YES, for what reason: We do not wish to disclose Part 1 until after the contract has been awarded to ensure value for money for this procurement, as Part 1 states the available budget for this contract. Disclosing this budget would prejudice the GLA's ability to solicit genuinely competitive bids, as there is a risk that potential suppliers will end up bidding to the maximum price available.

Until what date: 1 October 2023

**Part 2 – Sensitive information**

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under the FoIA should be included 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:**

Tia Harrop has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

**Assistant Director/Head of Service:**

Jeremy Skinner 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.

✓

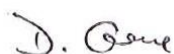
**Corporate Investment Board**

A summary of this decision was reviewed by the Corporate Investment Board on 2 May 2023.

✓

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES:**

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

**Signature:**

**Date:**

4 May 2023