

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR MAYORAL DECISION – MD2844

Title: Opinion research polling programme

Executive summary:

Approval is sought to commission a market research agency to provide periodic online polling of Greater London residents for four years, in order to support effective and impactful policymaking, and the development of strategies and programmes, at City Hall.

The new contract will secure a saving of over 20 per cent compared to the one it replaces.

Decision:

That the Mayor approves expenditure of up to £400,000 on periodic online polling services over the four-year period from November 2021 to October 2025 to support effective and impactful policymaking, and the development of strategies and programmes, at City Hall.

Mayor of London

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:



Date:

22/7/24

PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE TO THE MAYOR

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. The role of the GLA is to create the conditions whereby all Londoners can thrive. Using traditional forms of social research and innovative engagement, the Opinion Research team provide first-class evidence and insight into public opinion and behaviours. This is used to support effective and impactful policymaking, and the development of strategies and programmes, at City Hall.
- 1.2. From November 2016 to October 2017, a 12-month contract was awarded to YouGov (DD2042) in order to provide robust online opinion research insights to inform the development of statutory strategies. From November 2017 to October 2021, a further four-year contract was awarded to YouGov (MD2082) to deliver a monthly polling programme to inform the work of policy teams across City Hall, as well as the functional bodies. This contract will end in October 2021.
- 1.3. We now seek approval to commission a new four-year contract with a market research agency to provide periodic online polling of Greater London residents. This will be used to support effective and impactful policymaking, and the development of strategies and programmes, at City Hall. Services would be commissioned from November 2021 to October 2025 (inclusive). The contract will be agreed on a four plus one year criterion, with a requirement on the GLA to serve one month's notice to terminate the contract. This will allow the contract to be terminated at one month's notice at the request of the GLA.
- 1.4. Approval is being sought to commission the contract for a four-year period, which will cover the duration of the current Mayoral administration as well as the first year and a half of the next administration. This is to ensure that City Hall is equipped to continue delivering public polling into the next administration.
- 1.5. Programme requirements:
 - a monthly poll of 1,000 Londoners, with the ability to boost the poll sample by 500 interviews for certain demographic groups
 - ad hoc polls (approximately six per year) to provide the GLA with rapid public opinion results in order to respond to immediate/critical research priorities.
- 1.6. The current four-year contract under MD2082 has a value of £520,000, however the new four-year contract will have a value of £400,000. This constitutes savings of £120,000, through removal of the following programme requirement from MD2082:
 - access to a complementary polling database tool to support audience segmentation, marketing and media planning.
- 1.7. Approval is sought to commission periodic online polls via a competitive tender among market research suppliers capable of providing this service for a London sample.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

2.1. Objectives:

- to commission a programme of opinion polling services that supports effective and impactful policymaking; the development of strategies and programmes; and effective communications at City Hall during the next four years

- to achieve value for money for the Authority by commissioning and managing this programme on behalf of multiple teams at the GLA.

2.2. Outcomes:

- to ensure that our work is informed by the views of Londoners from all sections of the population.

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 Greater London Authority 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 polling a representative sample of Londoners, we will be hearing from those who have a protected characteristic. It will allow the GLA to conduct research that is inclusive of all Londoners; and to understand any differences in perceptions and experiences among specific groups, and give due consideration to how best to meet their needs. The contract will help ensure policy teams and the Mayor use insight from a representative sample of Londoners in the development of GLA policies and programmes.

4. Other considerations

Key risks and issues

- 4.1. The efficacy of online polling lies in a robust sample of respondents within the Greater London boundary, and the key risk is that the commissioned market research agency is unable to achieve a representative sample of Londoners. The technical evaluation assessment will require tendering companies to demonstrate that: they are capable of providing online polling with a representative sample of Londoners, at the frequency that we require; and they have the ability to boost the sample of respondents from different demographic groups.
- 4.2. The contract requirements as delivered during the current four-year contract met the GLA's polling needs.

Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

- 4.3. This programme of research has been delivered since November 2016 and has had a clear and demonstrable impact on the development and implementation of policies and programmes since then. This period of evaluation has allowed the project sponsor and officers to reach the decision to commission a polling programme for a further four years.
- 4.4. 'A City for All Londoners' aims to ensure people from all walks of life are healthy and live well alongside each other. The Mayor is committed to making sure that policymakers in City Hall are fully aware of public needs as early as possible. For this to happen, policymakers need to be able to engage with, and gather insight from, people from diverse backgrounds, with different perspectives and

experiences – representative polling of Londoners will allow the GLA to gather insights from a variety of Londoners.

- 4.5. Ensuring Londoners are at the heart of recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic was identified as cutting across all of the work on London's recovery. Public polling has so far played a key role in the development of the London Recovery programme, and ongoing polling will ensure that London's recovery continues to be informed by insights from Londoners.

Links to the GLA Group

- 4.6. The previous polling programme, from 2017 to 2021, supported functional bodies by delivering polling on their behalf and providing access to relevant polling data. Functional bodies were also able to commission and pay for their own ad-hoc polls through the contract. This provided value for money, as it avoided duplicating polling between the GLA and functional bodies. It also meant that functional bodies did not have to procure more costly polling elsewhere and pay for additional costs (such as project management and set-up costs) that were already covered within the GLA polling programme contract. The new contract will be delivered in a manner that can continue to support functional bodies.

Consultations and impact assessments

- 4.7. The appropriate procurement process will be followed to ensure that the successful company complies with the GLA's equal opportunities requirements. Conducting surveys with a representative sample 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

- 4.8. 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. Mayoral approval is sought for expenditure of up to £400,000 for the procurement of online polling services to support effective policymaking, and the development of policies and programmes, at City Hall between November 2021 and October 2025. The current contract approved under MD2082 ends in October 2021.
- 5.2. The contract will be awarded via a competitive tender process and will last four years from November 2021 to October 2025 (spanning five financial years). Therefore, the costs will be incurred over five financial years as follows:
 - 2021/22 – £42,000 (five months, from November 2021 to March 2022)
 - 2022/23 – £100,000
 - 2023/24 – £100,000
 - 2024/25 – £100,000
 - 2025/26 – £58,000 (seven months, from April 2025 to October 2025).
- 5.3. 2021-22 expenditure will be funded from the Opinion Research and Statistic's team 2021-22 budget held within the City Intelligence Unit that is part of Strategic and Communication's Directorate. Funding for future years' expenditure will be subject to the annual budget setting process and cannot be guaranteed.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1. The foregoing sections of this report indicate that the decisions requested of the Mayor concern the exercise of the GLA's general powers to do such things as may be considered to be facilitative of, or conducive or incidental to, the discharge of its principal purposes; and in formulating the proposals in respect of which a decision is sought, officers have complied 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.
- 6.2. In taking the decisions requested, the Mayor must have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty; namely the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, and to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (race, disability, gender, age, 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 (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). To this end, the Mayor should have particular regard to section 3 (above) of this report.
- 6.3. Officers must ensure that: the services required are procured by Transport for London (TfL), who will determine the detail of the procurement strategy to be adopted in accordance with the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code; and appropriate contract documentation is put in place and signed by the GLA, and any such supplier(s) before the commencement of the provision of such services.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

- 7.1. The Opinion Research team will manage the programme in order to ensure that all research undertaken delivers the high-quality, robust insight required by clients across the GLA.
- 7.2. TfL Commercial has been consulted and has advised there is no existing lot on the TfL Market Research Framework that meets all of our requirements. Therefore, we will proceed with a competitive tender process via the Crown Commercial Service Research Marketplace.

Activity	Timeline
Procurement of contract	August 2021
Contract award	October 2021
Delivery start date	November 2021
Delivery end date	October 2025

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 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? YES

If YES, for what reason: To allow a procurement process to be followed.

Until what date: 30 November 2021 or until such a time as the contract has been awarded.

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:

Myles Wilson has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following: ✓

Sponsoring Director:

Niran Mothada has reviewed the request and is satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities. ✓

Mayoral Adviser:

Richard Watts has been consulted about the proposal and agrees the recommendations. ✓

Advice:

The Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal. ✓

Corporate Investment Board

This decision was agreed by the Corporate Investment Board on 12 July 2021.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES:

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

Signature

D. Bone

Date

15 July 2021

CHIEF OF STAFF:

I am satisfied that this is an appropriate request to be submitted to the Mayor.

Signature

D. Bellamy

Date

15 July 2021