

GLA15/7.8 Update on Website Rationalisation Policy and the GLA website.

21 June 2007

BOARD PAPER REFERENCE – GLA15/7.9 – Transforming Government Initiative: Website Rationalisation

The future of the GLA website

Issue

1. The central initiative to rationalise the amount of websites across government is gathering pace and the Defra Transformational Government Team is currently looking at the future of the GLA website (amongst other NDPBs and Executive Agencies).

The **default position** for the GLA is that our website will be closed and content would be moved to both Direct.gov and Business Link with corporate content moved to the Defra website. All content will have to be moved by 2011 at the very latest although there will be an expectation that some content will start to move soon after the decision date of July 2007 with a strategy to move all further content in place shortly afterwards.

The GLA executive believe that this is not an acceptable proposal and would seriously undermine our efforts to curb exploitation and our continuous efforts to build a trust relationship with workers of all nationalities through a visible presence informing and requesting reports of exploitation. The Chairman wrote to Board members on 14 May with a reminder sent on the 23 May canvassing support for an application for exemption. 10 replied supporting the policy but others did not reply or were unable to support the policy because of their organisations policy toward this initiative.

The Defra Transformational Government Team has explained that it will be difficult to gain an exemption from this proposal and at a minimum would require the full backing of Lord Rooker who will take the proposal to the Cabinet Committee PSX (E) in July.

However, a case for Option 1 exemption has been submitted. This would allow the website to remain intact with a robust linking strategy to both Directgov and Business Link.

Current position

In the week beginning 4th June, the Director General of the Service Transformation Group within Defra, Andrew Birchell, is to consider the veracity of exemption cases submitted including that of the GLA. More work may be required in a series of bi-laterals with Defra and the Cabinet Office before a formal response is sent to the Cabinet Office, with the case being put to PXE in week commencing 16th July.

We have had no indication to date as to whether Defra and Lord Rooker will be supporting our case.