

CABINET

2 June 2015

Title: Formalising the North East London Strategic Alliance (NELSA)	
Report of the Leader of the Council	
Open Report	For Decision
Wards Affected: All	Key Decision: Yes
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Accountable Divisional Director: Fiona Taylor, Head of Legal and Democratic Services	
Accountable Director: Chris Naylor, Chief Executive	
Summary: <p>Many of the north east London boroughs share similar characteristics such as their demography, and therefore they face similar issues and challenges. Working together with other boroughs can help to strengthen the response to issues, add weight to any lobbying asks, reduce duplication of work and share responsibility across all boroughs. A good example of this is the recent joint work with neighbouring boroughs to lobby for fairer funding. For this reason, the following boroughs are proposing to work together and form the North East London Strategic Alliance (NELSA):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• London Borough of Barking and Dagenham• London Borough of Enfield• London Borough of Havering• London Borough of Newham• London Borough of Redbridge• London Borough of Waltham Forest <p>NELSA will be a politically led organisation with a core membership of the above local authorities, which make up the north east London area. The key purpose of NELSA is to develop and articulate a clear vision for north east London and to provide strategic leadership to ensure that a shared vision is realised.</p> <p>The Council has a clear vision for the borough and a set of priorities key to delivering this vision. The Borough sees itself as “London’s Growth Opportunity” and one of the priorities identified in its Corporate Plan concerns Growing the Borough. This will involve the Council working with London partners to deliver homes and jobs across our growth hubs and enhancing the borough's image to attract investment and business growth. NELSA will provide a good opportunity to advance and fulfil some of these objectives.</p> <p>This report sets out the proposed arrangements for the formation of NELSA and seeks Cabinet approval of the recommendations below to enable the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham to formally become a member.</p>	

Recommendation(s)

The Cabinet is recommended to:

- (i) Agree that the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham joins and participates as a member of the North East London Strategic Alliance (NELSA);
- (ii) Agree that the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham enters into and signs up to the NELSA partnership protocol (Appendix A) and the Inter-Authority Agreement (Appendix B) and any other necessary documents to be entered into by or between the six boroughs to facilitate the Council's membership of NELSA; and
- (iii) Approve the appointment of the Leader of the Council as the Council's nominated representative on NELSA and the two Deputy Leaders as nominated substitutes in the event of the Leader being unable to attend a NELSA meeting.

Reason(s)

Joining NELSA will contribute to the delivery of the Council's vision and priorities as set out in the Corporate Delivery Plan.

1. Background

- 1.1 The north east London boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, Enfield, Havering, Newham, Redbridge, and Waltham Forest intend to work together as a sub-region through the creation of the North East London Strategic Alliance (NELSA). The London borough of Waltham Forest has worked closely with representatives from all other boroughs to produce a partnership protocol and an inter-authority agreement. Cabinet are asked to agree to the Council signing up to these agreements in order to become a member of NELSA.
- 1.2 NELSA will be a politically led organisation with a core membership of the above local authorities which constitute the north east London area. The parties enter into the agreement for the purposes of realising a shared vision for the north east London area. The key purpose of NELSA is to develop and articulate a clear vision for north east London and to provide the strategic leadership to ensure that the vision is realised.
- 1.3 For the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (LBBD) this is an opportunity to build on existing relationships with neighbouring London boroughs in order to contribute to the delivery of the vision for the borough. What is becoming increasingly clear is the importance of better joint working to seize opportunities and tackle issues at a sub-regional level.
- 1.4 A similar alliance exists between the west London boroughs. The West London Alliance is a partnership of seven West London councils - Barnet, Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon, and Hounslow.
- 1.5 LBBD is currently also a member of the Growth Boroughs. The Growth Boroughs (formerly known as the host boroughs) is a partnership with other Olympic host

boroughs. The focus of this group is mainly around employment and skills and transport in order to achieve convergence with the rest of London by 2030. NELSA on the other hand comprises a different core membership and has much broader objectives (see below) allowing members to work together on a number of key issues not covered by the Growth Boroughs.

2. Establishing NELSA

2.1. The objectives of NELSA:

- 2.1.1. To provide a sub-regional voice for north east London via research and by building consensus around the needs and opportunities of the sub-region; raising its profile and making the strategic case for public and private and sector investment.
- 2.1.2. To work through existing partnerships and develop new partnerships, as may be required, to implement the agreed vision for NELSA in order to encourage and foster the delivery of new homes, jobs, improved skills, transportation and better public services for the benefit of north east London and London as a whole.
- 2.1.3. To act as ambassadors for the area, influencing key decision-makers, the development of policy in London and co-ordinating relationships between north east London and regional and central Government.

2.2. Membership

- 2.2.1. The membership of NELSA will consist of the six authorities listed above once the partnership protocol has been signed. Each authority will be required to pay a £10,000 annual membership fee payable within 30 days of signing the agreement. The membership fees will form part of the annual budget which will be spent, as decided by the Leaders' and Mayors' Board, in order to contribute to the delivery of NELSA objectives.
- 2.2.2. Enfield shall be the Lead Borough responsible for administering the Annual Budget. In discharging the Annual Budget activity Enfield will adopt standard Local Government financial control practices and principles as shall apply from time to time.

2.3. Chair of NELSA

- 2.3.1. The first Chair of NELSA will be the Leader of Waltham Forest and thereafter appointed in accordance with clause 7.3 of the partnership protocol.
- 2.3.2. The Chair will take executive leadership of NELSA through chairing the Leaders' and Mayors' Board, leading other strategic meetings as required, being the key advocate for north east London through NELSA, and corresponding on behalf of NELSA.
- 2.3.3. The Chair will rotate between the local authorities alphabetically every 2 years from the date of the Annual General Meeting. The period of office will normally be two years, subject to the Chair no longer being a member of his/her respective Authority and subject to the Chair tendering his/her resignation in accordance with clause 10.1 either event to invoke the appointment of a new Chair who shall be the Leader

or Mayor of the next Authority due to take up the Chair under the alphabetical rotation system.

- 2.3.4. The Authority holding the chair at any given time will be responsible for providing secretarial support to the Leaders' and Mayors' Board meetings. This will include arranging dates, room bookings, meeting logistics and minute taking. The Chief Executive of the local authority which holds the Chair of NELSA will provide support and advice to the Chair of NELSA.

2.4. Deputising for the Leader at NELSA meetings

- 2.4.1. NELSA will be led by a Leaders' and Mayors' Board comprising the Leaders and Mayors from each of the six boroughs. In the event that the Leader is unable to attend a meeting the partnership protocol provides substitutions will be allowed providing that the substitute is a bone fide representative and an executive member of the body nominating the substitute. For the Council, it is recommended that the deputising arrangement include either of the two Deputy Leaders to attend if the Leader is unable to.

2.5. Task and Finish Groups

- 2.5.1. Individual Task and Finish Groups will be set up for each specific task or project, as and when necessary, to be decided by the Leaders' and Mayors' Board. Once the Leaders' and Mayors' Board has decided that a Task and Finish Group has been deemed to have achieved the aims and objectives stated it will then be dissolved and no longer exist for the purposes of that particular task or project.
- 2.5.2. The task and finish group meetings will be chaired by the either the CEO or the most appropriate officer as decided by the Leaders' and Mayors' Board of the Local Authority which holds the Chair of NELSA, or a substitute nominated by the Chair, or agreed at the meeting, if s/he is unable to attend.
- 2.5.3. The Task and Finish Groups' will consist of officer representatives from each of the parties. The Task and Finish Groups' shall have responsibility for the creation and execution of the project plan and deliverables, and therefore it can draw technical, commercial, legal and communications resources as appropriate into itself. As each party to this Agreement is required to adhere to its own Authority's Constitution and internal procedure rules, each representative of every Authority on each Task and Finish Group is obliged to ensure that its own internal approvals and authority requirements are complied with in order to proceed with implementation of any workplan that has been discussed and agreed upon within its Task and Finish Group and before any proposal is submitted in final format to the Leaders' and Mayors' Board.

2.6. Resignation

- 2.6.1. Any Authority who wishes to resign as a member of NELSA shall give written notice of its resignation to the Leaders' and Mayors' Board and its resignation shall be effective three months after the date of notification.

3. Financial Implications

Implications prepared by: Kathy Freeman, Finance Group Manager

- 3.1. Barking and Dagenham will be required to make an annual membership fee of £10,000 which will form part of the annual budget for NELSA. This is a non-refundable payment should the Council wish to resign from NELSA.
- 3.2. The Inter Authority Agreement will designate the London Borough of Enfield as lead borough for administering the annual budget and the Leaders and Mayors Board will be responsible for managing the annual budget.
- 3.3. Decisions as to how the annual budget is spent will be decided by the Leaders and Mayors Board as deemed appropriate to achieve the objectives of NELSA.
- 3.4. The annual membership cost of NELSA will be funded from the Corporate Management budget following a review of existing corporate subscriptions.

4. Legal Implications

Implications prepared by: Eldred Taylor-Camara, Legal Group Manager

- 4.1 The Council has legal power (General power of competency under the Localism Act 2011) to enter into arrangements to participate as a member of NELSA. The structure and governance arrangements for NELSA are set out in the body of this report and its appendices.
- 4.2 As set out elsewhere in this report, the objectives of NELSA include working in partnership with the other boroughs to develop and advocate strategies for growth for and in the areas of the member authorities and to advocate at strategic level for these objectives.
- 4.3 The Alliance is not created as a legal partnership nor as a joint committee and no executive powers have been or are being sought to be delegated to NELSA. NELSA does not therefore have power to commit the Council to expenditure on any project or strategy that it may develop or wish to participate in/promote other than those to be decided upon and implemented using (and limited to) funds covered by the Annual Budget. Should the Council wish to participate in any project which will involve the financial or political commitment of the Council outside that covered by the Annual Budget, such project will need to come back to the Council for approval in accordance with the Council's governance arrangements.

Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report: None

List of Appendices:

- **Appendix A** - NELSA Partnership Protocol
- **Appendix B** - NELSA Inter-Authority agreement