

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2014/2015 REPORT NO. 217

MEETING TITLE AND DATE:
Cabinet 29th April 2015

REPORT OF:
Chief Executive

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Agenda – Part: 1	Item: 8
Subject: Establishment of the North East London Strategic Alliance Wards: All Non Key	
Cabinet Member consulted: Cllr. Doug Taylor	

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Building on the success of the North London Strategic Alliance, which worked to raise the profile of North London and increase investment in the region, Enfield, Waltham Forest, Newham, Barking and Dagenham Havering and Redbridge Councils are re-launching this sub-regional group as the North East London Strategic Alliance (NELSA) with the key purpose to 'articulate a clear vision for north-east London and to provide the strategic leadership to ensure the vision is realised.'
- 1.2 The prospective member councils are currently seeking approval to join NELSA through their individual constitutional decision-making processes. The membership will be confirmed once this has been completed.
- 1.3 This report sets out the key aims, objectives and governance of NELSA and asks Cabinet to approve Enfield Council's membership of NELSA and being the accountable body for the organisation.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Cabinet agree to Enfield Council joining the North-East London Strategic Alliance and authorise the Council Leader, Cllr. Doug Taylor, to sign the Partnership Protocol for the North East London Strategic Alliance and the Inter Authority Agreement in Relation to Funding for NELSA.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The North London Strategic Alliance comprising north London borough councils and public, private and voluntary organisations worked, over a number of years, to raise the profile of North London and increase investment in the region. Changing priorities among the NLSA members has led the remaining members and two new councils to refocus their activities and now Enfield, Waltham Forest, Newham, Barking and Dagenham Havering and Redbridge Councils are re-launching this sub-regional group as the North East London Strategic Alliance (NELSA).
- 3.2 The Protocol sets out NELSA's objectives, principles of collaboration, governance structures and roles and responsibilities of members.
- 3.3 NELSA is a politically led organisation whose key purpose is to 'articulate a clear vision for north-east London and to provide the strategic leadership to ensure the vision is realised.'
- 3.4 Using research and building consensus around needs and opportunities, NELSA will make a strategic case for public and private sector investment in the sub region; work in partnership to implement the agreed vision 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; and act as ambassadors for the area, influencing decision-makers, policy development in London and coordinating relationships between north-east London and regional and central government.
- 3.5 The Leaders and Mayor's Board will provide strategic oversight and direction for NELSA. Task and Finish groups comprising officers from each borough will be set up for each specific task or project. Each borough representative will be responsible for ensuring that their council's constitution and internal procedure rules are complied with in order to implement any workplan developed and agreed by the group. These groups will report quarterly to the Leaders and Mayor's Board.
- 3.6 The protocol also includes details of NELSA's management and governance and that each borough will make an annual contribution of £10,000 to fund expert advice, events, campaigns and publications.
- 3.7 The Inter Authority Agreement is a legally binding agreement, supplemental to the Protocol, to ensure that the funding contributed by each borough towards NELSA's activities is managed and spent in line with the terms contained in the document. Enfield will be the lead borough responsible for administering the annual budget.
- 3.8 The prospective member councils are currently seeking approval to join NELSA through their individual constitutional decision-making processes. The final membership will be confirmed once this has been completed.
- 3.9 Joining NELSA will not conflict with our continuing membership of the London Stansted Cambridge Consortium (LSCC). The purpose of the Consortium is to develop and articulate a clear vision for the London Stansted Cambridge Corridor and to provide the strategic leadership to help the vision become reality. It acts as the coordination mechanism for joint policies and initiatives and to develop cross-border and corridor-wide initiatives than can benefit neighbouring areas.

Waltham Forest, Newham and Redbridge Councils are also LSCC members giving opportunities for cross-fertilisation between what LSCC is doing and NELSA's Task and Finish Group activities to maximise the potential benefits to the area.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Enfield Council does not join a London sub-regional grouping. This would leave Enfield isolated, with reduced influence and the potential for missing out on current and future funding streams

5. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Sub-regional groupings are becoming more important as the discussions around devolution of powers from central government to a more local level are continuing and feature strongly in the election manifestos. National and European funding bodies are looking at functional economic areas that are bigger than individual local authorities.

5.2 It is also clear that there are some major challenges such as employment and skills, housing and health that would be more effectively addressed through a cross-borough approach through a sub-regional grouping.

5.3 Joining NELSA would enable Enfield to participate fully in addressing these challenges and have greater influence in discussions with national and regional government.

6. COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE, RESOURCES AND CUSTOMER SERVICES AND OTHER DEPARTMENTS

6.1 Financial Implications

The annual contribution per Borough is £10,000. This will be found from existing resources within the Chief Executive budget.

6.2 Legal Implications

6.2.1 Legal Services have considered and made all necessary amendments to the NELSA agreement and protocol and are satisfied as to the benefits and obligations derived from the agreement.

6.2.2 The Council has power under section 1(1) of the Localism Act 2011 to do anything that individuals generally may do provided it is not prohibited by legislation and subject to Public Law principles. Creating stronger more sustainable communities and building on the local economy are key priorities for the Council. There is no express prohibition, restriction or limitation contained in a statute against use of the power in this way.

6.2.3 In addition, section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 gives a local authority power to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of its functions. The recommendations are in accordance with these powers.

7. KEY RISKS

The major risk is that, by not being part of NELSA, Enfield will find itself isolated and with less much influence than those boroughs in sub-regional groupings. There is also the prospect of losing out on major funding opportunities to address our local issues.

8. IMPACT ON COUNCIL PRIORITIES

Fairness for All, Growth and Sustainability and Strong Communities

As part of NELSA, we will be able to present compelling business cases that demonstrate that local councils are best placed to design and deliver services that best meet our residents' needs and address local deprivation and inequality; deliver increased housing and encourage business growth and lobby for improved transport; and ensure that our residents feel safe and have improved health.

9. EQUALITIES IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

Corporate advice has been sought in regard to equalities and an agreement has been reached that an equalities impact assessment is not relevant for the approval of this report. Equalities impact assessments will be undertaken when seeking approval for the implementation of specific initiatives developed by NELSA.

10. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Performance management arrangements to ascertain the effectiveness of specific initiatives developed by NELSA will be agreed as part of the approval process.

11. PUBLIC HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Improving the health and wellbeing of all residents in North East London is one of NELSA's priorities and will enable better promotion of the strong case to Government and other public bodies for breaking down organisational boundaries, greater collaboration and gaining more control over particular funding streams.

Background Papers

None

Appendices

Partnership Protocol for the North East London Strategic Alliance
The Inter Authority Agreement in Relation to Funding for NELSA