

HILLINGDON COUNCIL'S MEMBERSHIP OF THE WEST LONDON ECONOMIC PROSPERITY BOARD

Cabinet Member & Portfolio	Cllr Steve Tuckwell, Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing & Growth
Responsible Officer	Dan Kennedy, Corporate Director of Residents Services
Report Author & Directorate	Mathieu Rogers, Head of Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Planning and Sustainable Growth
Papers with report	Appendix 1 – Proposed amended Functions and Procedure Rules

HEADLINES

Summary	A report proposing that Hillingdon Council joins its West London Alliance partners in becoming a member of the West London Economic Prosperity Board to help drive economic prosperity in Hillingdon.
Putting our Residents First Delivering on the Council Strategy 2022-2026	<p>This report supports our ambition for residents / the Council of: Have opportunities to earn an income that supports their families</p> <p>This report supports our commitments to residents of: A Thriving Economy</p> <p>And if there are any other sub-strategies or policies, e.g. Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy, Housing Policy add these here.</p>
Financial Cost	No financial cost
Select Committee	Residents' Services Select Committee
Ward(s)	All Wards

RECOMMENDATIONS

***That:**

- a) the London Borough of Hillingdon become a member of the Joint Committee of the London boroughs of Barnet, Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow and Hounslow (known as the “West London Economic Prosperity Board”);**
- b) the revised Functions and Procedure Rules as set out in the report, be adopted, noting that these will also need to be adopted by all other participating boroughs to take effect;**
- c) the Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing & Growth be appointed as the Council's voting member of the Joint Committee, with the Cabinet Member for Community & Environment as reserve voting Member;**
- d) authority to sign any further documentation relating to implementing the decision above, be delegated to the Director of Planning & Sustainable Growth, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing & Growth.**

**Note: the above recommendations are subject to the West London Economic Prosperity Board voting on Hillingdon's membership and the revised Rules at their meeting on 16 September 2025.*

Reasons for recommendation(s)

The West London Economic Prosperity Board is a Joint Committee of West London boroughs that collaborates to drive inclusive economic growth, investment, and regeneration across the sub-region by coordinating strategic planning, infrastructure, and skills development initiatives.

The recommendation is to join the “West London Economic Prosperity Board” (WLEPB) in partnership with Barnet, Brent, Ealing, Harrow, Hammersmith and Fulham, and Hounslow as it will enable Hillingdon Council to participate in this strategic Joint Committee and drive economic growth in the borough.

Hillingdon Council has started promoting economic growth in the borough as a way of supporting residents and businesses, therefore membership of a sub-regional Board will ensure that Hillingdon has a seat at the table when it comes to strategic decision making that impacts the wider West London economy.

A key point to be noted is that no powers are being *transferred*. The Council retains all its powers and can exercise them independently – but as a member of the WLEPB, Hillingdon will *additionally* be empowered to act together with other boroughs in a number of areas of joint interest, as set out in part (3) of the proposed revised Functions and Procedure Rules (see Appendix 1). Section 1.4 states that ‘The purpose of the Joint Committee will be collaboration and mutual co-operation and the fact that some functions will be discharged jointly by way of the Joint Committee does not prohibit any of the Participating Boroughs from promoting economic wellbeing in their own areas independently from the Joint Committee.’

Hillingdon becoming a member of the WLEPB will require a unanimous decision of the Board itself first, which is scheduled to vote on 16 September 2025, prior to Hillingdon's Cabinet meeting. The Board will also, at the same meeting, decide on the updated Functions and Procedure Rules (see Appendix 1) where the changes proposed are shown for reference. Hillingdon's Cabinet is asked to agree these Rules, subject to that. Existing Member boroughs will also need to individually approve the updated Rules thereafter.

Alternative options considered / risk management

If Hillingdon Council did not take up this opportunity to join the WLEPB, it would not be able to influence strategic economic decision making in the West London region.

Democratic, constitutional and overview and scrutiny considerations

Under the Council's Constitution, Cabinet approval is required for the Council to join the WLEPB, as it is a formal joint committee. Chapter 13 of the Constitution also lists any joint committees or arrangements the Council has agreed to join, i.e. those of London Councils. Cabinet will also recall the London Housing Consortium, which was a joint committee that the Council withdrew from in 2022.

This particular Joint Committee exercises executive (Cabinet) functions and by joining, the Council will be discharging some of these in relation to the wider economic prosperity agenda to the Joint Committee, notwithstanding the fact that the Council can also discharge such functions independently.

The way that this Joint Committee is governed is through its Functions and Procedure Rules, of which the latest revised version to adopt is attached to this report (Appendix 1). Recent revisions proposed reflect the changing economic environment the Joint Committee operates in, since they were last adopted. Changes to these Rules require the approval of all participating councils.

Appointed voting members to the Joint Committee are subject to their own Council's Code of Conduct and disclosure of interests rules. Each council may use its own substitution arrangements, e.g. Cabinet may appoint a reserve Member. Appointments are for a maximum of 4 years not extending beyond the Term of Office of a Councillor or may be changed by Cabinet mid-point at any time.

As set out in the Rules, joint committee meetings will follow similar procedures to formal local authority meetings. Chief Executives of participating councils will usually agree the agenda in advance. Clerking and administration will usually be handled by the council whose representative chairs the Committee. Any key decisions to be taken, may need to appear in Hillingdon's Cabinet Forward Plan for advance resident information.

The Joint Committee is not a separate legal body. Any legal or financial commitments must be entered into by all participating boroughs individually. Any withdrawal from the Joint Committee requires six months' notice.

In respect of the Council's select committees, as a joint committee exercising executive functions, its decisions are subject to scrutiny, oversight and potentially call-in by the overview and scrutiny arrangements of each member council. It is important that such agendas and decisions are

promptly shared with Democratic Services and the relevant Select Committee, which in Hillingdon is the Residents' Services Select Committee.

Ultimately, Hillingdon's participation is dependent upon the Board's decision on 16 September and following that, all other member councils agreeing the updated rules by their own relevant decision-making bodies.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. Background

- 1.1 The West London Economic Prosperity Board (WLEPB) is a formal Joint Committee of local authorities, established pursuant to powers under the Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000, and under the Local Authorities (Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 1.2 The WLEPB first met in 2015, following discussions facilitated by West London Alliance (WLA), to advance boroughs' aspirations for economic prosperity in West London. Importantly, the Functions and Procedure Rules for the WLEPB state that 'The purpose of the Joint Committee will be collaboration and mutual co-operation and the fact that some functions will be discharged jointly by way of the Joint Committee does not prohibit any of the Participating Boroughs from promoting economic wellbeing in their own areas independently from the Joint Committee.'
- 1.3 Five boroughs initially formed the Joint Committee, with Hammersmith & Fulham joining formally during 2016. The Board now consists of the Leaders of the constituent councils, currently comprising six of the seven West London Alliance member authorities (Barnet, Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow and Hounslow). The member authorities are referred to in the Functions and Procedure Rules for the WLEPB as the 'Participating Boroughs'.
- 1.4 Hillingdon now wishes to join the WLEPB as a Participating Borough. This would align the WLEPB membership with that of WLA as a whole. The Functions and Procedure Rules state that 'When a new borough wishes to become a Participating Borough, then this may be achieved if agreed by a unanimous vote of all the existing Participating Boroughs'.
- 1.5 Relevant governance, democratic services or monitoring officers within the West London boroughs have been consulted by WLA officers, to solicit expert input and seek to ensure that all parties have a common view of the necessary processes for admittance of new members to the WLEPB, and for agreement of any changes to the Function and Procedure Rules.

2. Purpose of the Joint Committee

- 2.1 The Joint Committee's role and purpose on behalf of the Participating Boroughs relates to ensuring appropriate, effective and formal governance is in place for the purposes of delivering the West London Vision for Growth and advancing Participating Boroughs' aspirations for greater economic prosperity in West London, including promoting "the

Economic Prosperity Agenda”, in partnership with employers, representatives from regional and central government, and education and skills providers.

- 2.2 The purpose of the Joint Committee will be collaboration and mutual co-operation and the fact that some functions will be discharged jointly by way of the Joint Committee does not prohibit any of the Participating Boroughs from promoting economic wellbeing in their own areas independently from the Joint Committee. Hillingdon joining would align the WLEPB membership with WLA as a whole – making the WLEPB a more powerful and coherent vehicle to advocate for West London boroughs’ interests and ensuring that Hillingdon has its say in the issues the Board focuses on.
- 2.3 Membership of the WLEPB may provide new opportunities to attract investment and funding to the borough. Any funding requests or joint funding applications made by the WLEPB will need to be considered by Hillingdon’s Cabinet before agreeing at the Joint Committee as detailed in section 1.5: ‘The Joint Committee is not a self-standing legal entity but is part of its constituent authorities. Any legal commitment entered into pursuant of a decision of the Joint Committee must be made by all of the Participating Boroughs.’

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications to the Council from the recommendations in this report. Any future commitments for expenditure by the Joint Committee would require individual Council / Cabinet prior approval.

RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

The benefit or impact upon Hillingdon residents, service users and communities?

The Joint Committee’s role and purpose on behalf of the Participating Boroughs relates to ensuring appropriate, effective and formal governance is in place for the purposes of delivering the West London Vision for Growth and advancing Participating Boroughs’ aspirations for greater economic prosperity in West London, including promoting “the Economic Prosperity Agenda”, in partnership with employers, representatives from regional and central government, and education and skills providers.

Consultation & Engagement carried out (or required)

No public consultation is required to join.

CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance have reviewed this report and concurs with the Financial Implications set out above, noting the recommendations to seek approval for the London Borough of Hillingdon to become a member of the West London Economic Prosperity Board (WLEPB) along with seeking the approval to adopt the revised functions and procedure rules as set out in the report, noting these changes require adoption by all participating boroughs to take effect.

Furthermore, it is noted that there is no direct financial impact to the General Fund resulting from the recommendations contained within this report, any future funding requests or joint funding applications made by the WLEPB will be reported to Cabinet to seek approval prior to agreement at the Joint Committee.

Legal

Section 101(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 (“LGA 1972”) sets out a general power for a local authority to discharge its functions by forming a committee, a sub-committee or by an any other local authority.

Section 101(5) of the LGA 1972 allows two or more local authorities to discharge their functions jointly by joint committees.

Section 101(5A) of the LGA 1972 sets out that arrangements formed under section 101(5) cease to have effect if a function becomes an executive function of any of the local authorities forming the joint committee.

The West London EPB is a pre-existing formal joint committee, currently comprising six local authorities (“participating boroughs”), established to ensure effective and formal governance supports the participating boroughs’ ambitions for greater economic prosperity in the West London area.

Under chapter 13 of the Council’s constitution, and by a decision of the Cabinet, the Council may make decisions with other bodies, transfer its functions to other bodies or exercise powers on behalf of other bodies. Specifically, the Council and/or the Cabinet may establish joint arrangements with one or more local authorities, and such arrangement may involve a Joint Committee.

In consideration of this report (and accompanying Appendix 1 – Functions and Procedure Rules) and the Council’s constitution, there are no legal impediments to the Council’s appointment as a participating borough, nor in relation to the adoption of the revised Functions and Procedure Rules.

With regards to the remaining recommendations, there are no further issues which legal services consider necessary to be brought to the specific attention of the Cabinet.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL