

West London Alliance Accord

1. Introduction

1.1 This West London Alliance Accord (Accord) sets out why the councils participating in the West London Alliance (WLA) are working together and how they organise themselves to achieve their shared aims and objectives. This is not intended to be a legally binding document but is a high level statement of intent by the councils.

2. Aims of the West London Alliance

2.1 In working together the councils participating in the WLA aim to:

- Provide improved and more resilient services, focussed on and responding to the needs of residents, businesses and other service users;
- Achieve better value for money and realise financial savings; and
- Enhance the social, economic and environmental position of West London.

3. Objectives of the West London Alliance

3.1 In working together the councils participating in the WLA objectives are:

- To improve the prospects of achieving the participant councils' strategic objectives by working together where that adds value over the option of boroughs acting individually;
- To share investment, purchasing and resources where it will achieve improved services, better value for money and financial savings;
- To provide a unified voice for public sector interests in West London in order to have a greater impact on the regional and national policy and strategies affecting the interests of West London councils and its communities.

4. Principles of Joint Working

4.1 The WLA councils have agreed to adopt the following principles to guide their collaboration:

Residents First: putting the interest of the West London residents first in developing and undertaking collaboration

Innovation: seeking innovative and imaginative solutions to improve service delivery and create resilience

Challenge: being open to challenge from each other – as well as by regional and national bodies

Best practice: utilising best, and “next/future practice” approaches to procurement and services

Necessity: working collaboratively where that is necessary to achieve the best outcome

Partnership: developing positive and effective partnership working across the WLA

Mutual Support: contributing fully to the achievement of WLA programmes and projects when a commitment to them has been made

Accountability: achieved through delivery of agreed outcomes within a sound governance framework

Transparency: making open and clear decisions and demonstrating the improvements and savings made from shared services to residents and scrutiny bodies within each of the participating WLA Boroughs

Information sharing: sharing information and seeking to keep each other informed whilst respecting legal obligations of confidentiality and data protection.

5. Membership of the West London Alliance

5.1 The member councils of the WLA ('WLA members') are the signatories to this Accord. With the agreement of all of the members of the WLA further councils may join the WLA and should then become parties to this Accord.

5.2 The WLA members will collaborate in programmes and projects with other councils where there is a mutual interest in doing so but it is accepted by the members that there is no obligation on councils to participate in every programme or project sponsored by the WLA.

5.3 Where it is in the collective interests of the WLA members they will open WLA programmes and projects to the participation of other councils who share their aims and objectives for the programme or project. Such other councils will be expected to contribute the full cost implications arising from their participation in such programmes and projects and take full part in their governance.

6. Managing the West London Alliance

6.1 The strategy and policy direction of the WLA is set by the Leaders' and Chief Executives' West London Alliance Board (West London Alliance Board) comprising the Leaders and Chief Executives of the councils which are members of the WLA. The Terms of Reference for the West London Alliance Board are appended to this Accord.

6.1 The overall management of the business of the WLA is carried out by a Chief Executives' Board the Terms of Reference for which are appended to this Accord.

6.3 The WLA members may set up Programme Boards and other project delivery arrangements when it is expedient to do so. In each case such Programme Boards will draw up and have agreed by the Chief Executives' Board their Terms of Reference, membership and operating arrangements.

It is not necessary or expected that each WLA member council will participate in every WLA programme and project. Member councils will decide on participation on the merits of each programme.

6.4 The West London Alliance Board, Chief Executives' Board and Programme Boards do not have delegated powers from their councils. When decisions are made at these Programme Boards, the Programme Board member for each council will ensure that they have the authority to make a decision on behalf of their council. It is acknowledged that in every case where collaborative actions, projects or programmes are undertaken through the WLA the governance processes of member councils must be followed with regard to participation.

6.5 The overall management of the WLA is supported by the WLA Office. The Office staff will be employed by a WLA member council. Direction and performance management of the Office is by the Chief Executives' Board. The WLA Office is supported by all members of the WLA and it operates in their collective interests.

7. Resourcing the West London Alliance and Programmes and Projects

7.1 The WLA Office is funded by all members of the WLA paying an equal annual contribution to the running costs of the Office which is set by the Chief Executives' Board on an annual basis.

7.2 Programmes and projects are resourced by the participating councils agreeing through the programme management arrangements the budget and how the costs are to be met by contributions by the participant councils and/or other funding sources.

7.3 The Terms of Reference for Programme Boards and Project Groups set out which is the lead council that will hold the programme/project budget. The Programme Boards receive an annual budget report and reports on their budget by exception during the course of the year unless other arrangements are agreed in the Terms of Reference for the Programme Board.

7.4 It is recognised that lead councils employing staff, holding budgets, entering into contracts for grants or contracts for the provision of services will incur risks and liabilities on behalf of the other participating councils and that this is necessary for the efficient and effective running of the WLA and delivery of its programmes and projects. It is therefore agreed that for each instance where this occurs the participating councils will put into place an agreement regarding the fair and equitable sharing of the risks and liabilities between all participants in the programme or project provided that the lead councils exercise all due care and diligence and act lawfully when employing staff or entering into contracts for grants or contracts for the provision of services.

7.5 In order to protect the interests of the WLA members and particularly lead councils, it is agreed that a minimum of twelve months' notice is required to be given by a council should it decide to withdraw from a programme, project or the WLA.

8. Business Planning for the West London Alliance

8.1 The WLA Office and Programme Boards will produce a business plan in or around November of each financial year which contains a three year plan for their aims, objectives and activities, financial savings and benefits to be realised and revised budget for the current year and proposed budget for future years. An aggregate business plan for all WLA activity will be presented to a meeting of West London Alliance Board.

8.2 By no later than the end of June of each year an Annual report for the WLA will be produced covering all WLA activities and this will be presented to a meeting of West London Alliance Board.

8.3 A gateway process is operated by the Chief Executives' Board to manage the development and agreement to new programmes and projects.

8.4 Where a shared service is developed by WLA members a Service Level Agreement or similar will be developed by the participating boroughs to manage the service and its performance

8.5 The free flow of information, knowledge and data is a prerequisite for the effectiveness of the WLA and the councils share information to the greatest extent possible, where necessary putting

into place data sharing protocols and agreements. The councils will keep under active review their management of data sharing and related information security.

Leaders' and Chief Executives' West London Alliance Board - Terms of Reference

Membership

1. The membership of the West London Alliance Board comprises Leaders and Chief Executives of the West London councils which are signatories to the West London Alliance Accord.
2. Leaders may be represented by their Deputies or other cabinet/executive members to whom they delegate their authority for the purpose of the West London Alliance Board meeting.

Purpose

3. The purpose of the Alliance Board is to approve and give strategic direction to the policy, activities and programmes of the West London Alliance (WLA).
4. The aims and objectives of the WLA are set out in the Accord.

Quorum and Decision Making

5. There is no quorum for meetings and all decisions will be made by consensus between all WLA members.
6. It is understood and agreed that not every WLA member needs to participate in every WLA initiative or activity.
7. Where decisions are made at the West London Alliance Board it is understood that the participants have the authority to make those decisions or are able to secure that authority.

Meeting Frequency and Business

8. The West London Alliance Board will meet at least two times a year and may meet more often.
9. A meeting in November/December will receive and consider a report on the business plan for joint working by the councils through the WLA for the next three financial years
10. A meeting in May/June will receive and consider a report on the outcomes of the joint working between the councils in the previous financial year.
11. The chair of the West London Alliance Board will be a council Leader selected by the WLA council Leaders to serve for a term of two years. The chair may service more than one term. Selection will take place in June following the commencement of the new municipal year.

Chief Executives' Board - Terms of Reference

Membership

1. The membership of the Board comprises solely Chief Executives of the West London councils which are signatories to the West London Alliance Accord.

Purpose

2. The purpose of the Board is to provide overall management direction and leadership to the activities of the West London Alliance and its programmes and projects.
3. The Board is to act in furtherance of the aims and objectives of the WLA which are set out in the WLA Accord
4. The purpose of the Board meetings is to:
 - a) Enable the exchange of knowledge and information between Board members about current issues and challenges for the councils in West London
 - b) Provide a forum to develop, explore and initiate new collaborative policy, strategy and actions with the intention of better achieving the participating councils' aims and objectives
 - c) Provide oversight and challenge to the progress and achievements of West London Alliance sponsored or managed programmes and to initiate corrective action where programmes are not delivering their objectives or are at serious risk of not doing so.
 - d) Provide management and direction to the WLA Office.

Quorum and Decision Making

5. Decisions will be made by consensus.
6. There is no quorum for Board meetings. Decisions of the Board will be final when there is a full attendance. Should one or more members of the Board not be present then decisions will be considered final within five working days of the dispatch of the notes of the meeting provided no objection is raised by a Chief Executive.
7. Each meeting will be chaired by a Chief Executive on a rota basis.
8. It is understood that Chief Executives in making decisions through the Board have ensured that they have the authority to do so or can secure that authority.
9. A note of each meeting will be produced and sent to each Chief Executive within four working days of the meeting taking place. Notes will only be sent to Chief Executives and it is their decision about how the information about the meeting is then distributed within their council.

Meeting Frequency

10. Board meetings will be held monthly except during August.