

London Anchor Institutions' Network - Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday 12 September 2023

Time: 14:00 – 15:30 BST

Location: Room 5ES (Small Auditorium), 10th Floor, Transport for London, 5 Endeavour Square, London, E20 1JN

Chair: Wendy Thomson, Vice-Chancellor, University of London (LAIN Co-Chair)

Member representatives in attendance

- Andrew Gilbert, Co-Chair, London Jewish Forum
- Daniela Kirchner, Chief Operating Officer, Film London (virtually)
- Karen Wallbridge, Head of Talent, Transport for London
- Kate Gibbs, Head of Inclusive Economy, Camden Council (virtually, for Jenny Rowlands)
- Lizzie Smith, Director of Workforce, Training and Education, London region (Interim) and Senior Responsible Officer (SRO), NHS London Anchor Programme
- Mariam Hassam, Assistant Secretary General, Muslim Council of Britain (for Zara Mohammed)
- Mark Corbett, Head of Policy and Networks, London Higher (for Dr Diana Beech)
- Mary Vine-Morris, Regional Director for London, Association of Colleges
- Muniya Barua, Deputy Chief Executive, BusinessLDN
- Niran Mothada, Executive Director, Strategy and Communications, GLA
- Phil Graham, Executive Director, Good Growth, GLA
- Richard Watts, Deputy Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office, GLA
- Tess Fayers, Director of Wastewater Operations, Thames Water
- Wendy Thomson, Vice-Chancellor, University of London (Co-Chair)

Apologies

- Dr Diana Beech, Chief Executive, London Higher (sent delegate)
- Ben Rogers, Professor of Practice, University of London
- David Rowell, Assistant Director, Procurement and Commercial (for Mostaque Ahmed)
- James Watkins, Head of Policy and Public Impact, London Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Jenny Rowlands, Camden Council on behalf of London Councils (sent delegate)
- Lucy Craven, Head of Corporate Affairs, London City Airport (new representative for London City Airport, replacing Liam McKay)
- Fr Luke Miller, Archdeacon of London, Diocese of London
- Mark Roberts, Director of Commercial Services, Metropolitan Police Service
- Mark Ross, London Jewish Forum
- Martin Machray, Executive Director of Performance – London, NHS England and Improvement (Co-Chair)
- Mostaque Ahmed, Director of Corporate Services and Chief Financial Officer, London Fire Brigade
- Sam Gurney, Regional Secretary for London, East and South East England, Trades Union Congress
- Zara Mohammed, Secretary General, Muslim Council of Britain (sent delegate)

Other attendees

- Alex Conway, Assistant Director for Economic Development and Programmes, GLA
- Alex Godbold, Senior Policy Officer, Children and Young Londoners, GLA (virtually)
- Clara Hallot, Bloomberg Associates (virtually)
- Gordon Innes, Bloomberg Associates (virtually)
- Helen Connor, Senior Events and Communications Officer, GLA (virtually)
- Katherine Adams, GLA Business Partner, GLA Group Collaborative Procurement, Transport for London (virtually)
- Linda Gibbs, Bloomberg Associates (virtually)
- Luke Bruce, Interim Assistant Director, Public Affairs & Strategic Partnerships, GLA
- Miriam Lea, Senior Policy Officer, Economic Fairness, GLA (virtually)
- Olivia Tusinski, Principal Programme Officer, London Anchor Institutions' Network, GLA (virtually)
- Rachel Williamson, Programme Director, Economic Fairness, GLA
- Souraya Ali, Head of London Anchor Institutions Programme Coordination, GLA
- Suzie Alavi, Principal Programme Officer, London Anchor Institutions' Network, GLA
- Saritha Visvalingam, Responsible Procurement Manager, TfL (virtually)
- Shehreen Najam, Senior Project Officer, Skills and Employment, GLA (virtually)
- Tim Rudin, Head of Responsible Procurement and Supplier Skills Team, TfL (virtually)

1. Welcome and actions review

New representatives introduced themselves, including Tim Rudin (Transport for London), new co-chair of the Procurement working group.

Minutes from June's Steering Committee meeting were approved.

An update on actions from the last meeting was provided by Souraya Ali (GLA):

- **Members** to connect both individually and institutionally with the [LAIN LinkedIn page](#) and re-share content across their own channels.
 - *Closed, with thanks. Please continue to share content and the page.*
- **Members** to get in touch with the LAIN team about any communications opportunities that they would like to take up.
 - *Open - reiterated as an action in this month's Programme Update paper.*
- **Members** to provide feedback on networking events for Steering Committee members and let the LAIN team know if your organisation would like to host.
 - *Closed, with thanks. The LAIN team plans to host more events next year. Input and suggestions are always welcome.*
- **Members** to consider opportunities to engage in other focus areas and join these working groups, in particular the procurement working group.
 - *Closed. Thames Water has joined the Procurement group and London Fire Brigade has since joined the Mentoring Young People and Hiring and Skills working groups. Members can join groups at any time by getting in touch with the LAIN team.*
- **Members** to continue progressing uptake of procurement e-learning modules and report back on completion rates.
 - *Closed. The NHS, University of London, GLA, TfL, London Fire Brigade and Met Police have all successfully uploaded the e-learning modules to their respective*

learning management systems. Work is underway to either make the modules mandatory or to undertake internal communications to promote uptake. Procurement working group members will continue to report on completion rates.

- **Members** to engage with their working group representatives to set new and review existing targets across each focus area.
 - *Open - reporting commissioned last week provides an opportunity for members to review their targets and consider any scope for stretch. This includes recently agreed work areas for the Green New Deal working group e.g. Green Last Mile Deliveries.*
- **LAIN team** to explore with BusinessLDN opportunities for LAIN members to support implementation of the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP).
 - *In progress. Souraya Ali and Mark Hilton will bring proposals to a future meeting.*
- **LAIN team** to discuss with Andrew Gilbert where further opportunities for collaboration with commercial and community sectors might be.
 - *In progress – Andrew has been in touch with a number of partners and we continue to work with him to explore opportunities for collaboration beyond LAIN.*
- **Members** to explore their organisation's appetite for switching to 100% renewable energy and report back to the LAIN team on or before the next Steering Committee.
 - *Outstanding – this was addressed in item 2 as part of the programme updates.*
- **Members** to promote the importance of increasing carbon literacy amongst senior leadership to be able to more effectively pursue the net zero agenda.
 - *Outstanding – members were asked to feed back on progress to the LAIN team.*

2. Programme updates

Souraya Ali (GLA) spoke to the programme update paper, highlighting the following points:

- Some fantastic events have been delivered through LAIN over the summer, notably the Meet the Buyer event in June for diverse-owned small businesses and 'Side Hustle – Routes into Entrepreneurship' for youth workers, an online workshop co-delivered with the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry and a great example of the added value members can bring through their expertise to support our goals.
- The LAIN team and other representatives have continued to present at member, stakeholder and public events to promote the work of LAIN. This includes a presentation to the Mayor's London Business Forum, which was well received. Upcoming engagements include a national event by the Health Anchors Learning Network which provides an opportunity to present LAIN in a national context.
- Steering committee members will have received an email from Souraya with a commission for reporting. This follows discussion at steering committee meetings on the importance of tracking our collective progress and agreement of standardised metrics. We recognise that pledges and progress will vary dependent on each member's starting point and the nature of their organisation. The deadline for reporting has been set with a view to being able to share headline figures and achievements as part of a substantive item on LAIN at the London Partnership Board (LPB) meeting in October. Please contact Souraya for any queries.

- The item on LAIN at October's LPB meeting will spotlight work by the Procurement and Green New Deal working groups and highlight actions that can be taken by Board members which complement LAIN's activity. This follows a recent opportunity to share work in the Hiring and Skills work strand at the Board's last meeting in June. The Board is very supportive of anchor ways of working and has a continued interest in sponsoring the network as well as benefitting from progress and learnings that can be shared by LAIN, given alignment between their agendas.
- Congratulations were extended to steering committee member Lizzie Smith, who was jointly honoured as a Health and Social Care Champion at the Living Wage Champion Awards this summer for her dedication to promoting the London Living Wage, and LAIN co-chair Wendy Thomson, for University of London's recent nomination in the Times Higher Education Awards category of 'Outstanding Contribution to the Local Community' for its leading role in LAIN.
- On the topic of renewable energy, tabled at the last steering committee meeting, members with an interest in learning about switching to renewable/green energy sources and/or tariffs are invited to express their interest in taking part in a peer-led seminar. Tess Fayers (Thames Water) responded that Thames Water would be happy to support this. Thames Water is a producer of green energy and employs an energy management and pricing specialist.

ACTION: Members to let Souraya Ali know by 13 October if your organisation is interested in joining a session on opportunities to switch to 100% renewable or green energy tariffs.

- The LAIN team held two kick off meetings with LAIN Communications Champions from across the network in July. These meetings sparked great discussions about how members can better support each other to deliver engaging internal and external communications. The LAIN team is working towards filming another set of impact videos related to the themes of the network.

ACTION: Members to let the LAIN team know by 6 October if you have a subject idea for an impact video or work that you would like to be featured.

- Long-standing partners of LAIN, Bloomberg Associates (BA) have offered to undertake an evaluation of LAIN in the coming months. It is proposed that this is composed of two key elements:
 - demonstrating and positioning LAIN's progress to date
 - considering options for a longer-term operating model.

Members supported the proposal and suggested that the evaluation should include:

- hard data on progress and achievements
- benchmarking LAIN against comparable initiatives in other cities nationally and internationally
- options analysis on what subsequent stages of the programme could look like and future approach including testing of LAIN's scope, scale and priorities
- how collaboration and partnership working enabled through LAIN has been effective in achieving benefits for Londoners and members' own organisations.

ACTION: Members to let the LAIN team know if you are interested in providing steer and input into the evaluation.

- The GLA's Economic Fairness team is working with Good Work Standard (GWS) members to renew their accreditation, which must be completed every four years.

ACTION: Members to advise relevant colleagues to get in touch with the GLA's Economic Fairness team (fairness@london.gov.uk) to kick off reaccreditation for the GWS or pursue accreditation if they have not yet joined the GWS community.

3. Childcare

The chair passed over to Tess Fayers (Thames Water) to lead the item. Tess explained that following direction from the Steering Committee in February's meeting, the LAIN team set up a Task and Finish Group to explore opportunities for LAIN to address childcare issues in the context of how these are affecting the employment, retention and progression of – primarily – women in the workforce.

This aligns to LAIN's existing strategic priority of creating more inclusive workplaces and getting more Londoners into good work. It also responds to the recruitment challenges and skills shortages many members are facing.

Parental policies are key factors that differentiate organisations as attractive places to work. Thames Water has recently refreshed its policies for this purpose and is keen to continue identifying gaps and how these can be addressed.

The Task and Finish Group identified opportunities and recommendations relating to:

- Supporting members' own existing and potential workforces
- Supporting the early years sector itself – as many of the issues affecting parents are rooted in challenges the sector is facing.

The group prioritised its recommendations based on impact and feasibility (time/cost/complexity), learning from some good practice across the network.

Members shared feedback on discussion points outlined in the cover note, as follows:

- BusinessLDN in partnership with KPMG and Central District Alliance has developed a similar set of recommendations, with recommendations for Government as well as businesses to improve the availability, affordability and quality of childcare provision. Muniya Barua (Business LDN) highlighted eligibility gaps in entitlements proposed by Government which e.g., currently excludes those in education or training, as well as a lack of clarity around taxation rules concerning workplace nursery partnerships that are preventing employers from establishing these.
- Members discussed the need for both Government and business to take action, as well as the opportunity for LAIN members to reinforce concerns being expressed by the early years sector about their ability to deliver on new entitlements.
- It was raised that a coordinated rather than collective approach to advocacy by interested members would be more effective; BusinessLDN volunteered to coordinate and support any related advocacy with LAIN members.

- Members highlighted critical workforce issues faced by the sector including the reduced take up of childcare courses across further education providers. *Note: The Local Skills Improvement Plan, developed by BusinessLDN, aims to address this.*
- Members stated a preference for LAIN to address a focussed set of recommendations to maximise impact, with a primary focus on creating more inclusive workplaces and raising standards across the capital.
- Members expressed particular interest in progressing recommendations on improving flexible working practice, including improving access to flexible working for non desk-based roles and better supporting parents and carers with school-age children as well as those in early years to balance their care and work responsibilities.
- This aligns to existing aspirations amongst members. For example, NHS England has recently published its Long Term Workforce Plan which has a focus on flexible working as a means to promote a sustainable future workforce, and NHS London is now developing its vision to achieve this.
- The Mayor's Good Work Standard also provides employers with a structure to review and enhance related practice and policies and gain accreditation.
- It was suggested that Childcare Sufficiency Assessments (CSAs) undertaken by local authorities could inform action taken by LAIN in this area. However, it was noted that the majority of early years providers are privately-owned and assessments do not provide a sound basis on which to forecast the availability of future provision.
- Members expressed interest in the Task and Finish Group's recommendation for members to transfer unspent apprenticeship levy to early years providers. However, greater guidance and work is needed to ensure a clear and robust process is in place and promote uptake amongst providers.

Decisions were made as follows:

- LAIN will progress a focus on childcare as a sub-theme contributing to the existing goals of the Hiring & Skills working group on inclusion, attraction and retention.
- A working group will be established to progress this and will work closely with the Hiring and Skills working group, supported by the LAIN programme team.
- LAIN will not pursue lobbying activity as a collective. However, BusinessLDN can support and coordinate lobbying by interested members to reinforce concerns around the availability, affordability and quality of childcare provision.

4. AOB

- The next meeting will take place on 12 December.
- It was agreed that meetings will run in person going forwards, with the option to attend online.
- Meetings for 2024 will be scheduled shortly.

ACTION: Members to contact the LAIN team if you are interested in hosting the next meeting.