

Subject: Proposed Establishment of EU Exit Working Group

Report to: GLA Oversight Committee

Report of: Executive Director of Secretariat

Date: 20 July 2016

This report will be considered in public

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out proposals for establishing an EU Exit Working Group to ensure that the effects on London and Londoners of the United Kingdom's vote to leave the European Union (EU) are examined, and to make recommendations to the Mayor, Government and any other relevant parties in relation to the issue.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **That the Committee establishes an EU Exit Working Group, with terms of reference as follows:**
- **To co-ordinate the work of the London Assembly's committees in relation to the United Kingdom's vote to leave the European Union;**
 - **To lead for the London Assembly in the Government's negotiations with the European Union to help to ensure that London's voice is heard;**
 - **To consider the activities and approaches of other devolved administrations and relevant bodies across the United Kingdom in relation to the UK's vote to leave the EU, with a view to ensuring any consequential implications arising for London are taken into account; and**
 - **To make recommendations to the Mayor, Government and any other relevant parties in relation to the UK's vote to leave the EU.**
- 2.2 **That, subject to the decision in recommendation 2.1 above, agrees the size and allocation of seats on the Working Group; appoints Members to the Working Group; appoints the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Working Group; appoints all other Members of relevant party Groups as substitute Members.**

3. Background

3.1 Following the referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union, the Assembly, at its meeting on 6 July 2016, passed the following motion:

“This Assembly recognises and accepts the democratic vote of the British people to leave the European Union.

This Assembly also notes that London, as a region of Britain, voted overwhelmingly to remain within the European Union.

This Assembly recognises that the decision to leave the European Union will have major consequences for London, as the capital of Great Britain, and for the lives of people who live and work in this city.

This Assembly believes strongly that London's voice needs to be heard loudly and clearly in the consequential negotiations regarding Britain's exit from the EU.

This Assembly therefore determines to set up a working group to examine the effects of Britain's vote to leave the European Union on London and Londoners, and to make recommendations to the Mayor, to the government and any other relevant parties with whom we may favourably make the case for London over the coming years.

This working group should be set up as soon as is practicable and as a Panel of the London Assembly's Oversight Committee.

Further to the Mayor of London's and Prime Minister's statements, this Assembly also endorses the view that London should take a full role in the highest level of negotiations around the UK's withdrawal from the European Union.”

4. Issues for Consideration

4.1 The GLA Oversight Committee is recommended to consider establishing the EU Exit Working Group with the following terms of reference.

- To co-ordinate the work of the London Assembly's committees in relation to the United Kingdom's vote to leave the European Union;
- To lead for the London Assembly in the Government's negotiations with the European Union to help to ensure that London's voice is heard;
- To consider the activities and approaches of other devolved administrations and relevant bodies across the United Kingdom in relation to the UK's vote to leave the EU, with a view to ensuring any consequential implications arising for London are taken into account; and
- To make recommendations to the Mayor, Government and any other relevant parties in relation to the UK's vote to leave the EU.

4.2 If the Committee agrees to establish the EU Exit Working Group, the Committee is asked to agree the size and allocation of seats on the Working Group, noting that political balance requirements do not apply to working groups; appoints Members to the Working Group; appoints the Chair and

Deputy Chair of the Working Group; and appoints all other Members of relevant party Groups as substitute Members.

- 4.3 While the Working Group will meet regularly in order to take an overview of the Assembly's work on this issue, and to take the lead role in relation to relevant intergovernmental matters, it is anticipated that the Assembly's Committees would continue to lead on related issues that fall within their terms of reference as part of their work programmes.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 Section 55(4) of the GLA Act provides the Assembly may: "appoint one or more committees ("advisory committees") to advise it on any matter relating to the discharge of its functions". The Assembly may delegate its functions (except powers that are exercised jointly with the Mayor) to a committee, sub-committee or individual Member of the Assembly (sections 54(1) and 55(1)), but not to an advisory committee, which may only advise in accordance with section 55(4).
- 5.2 The political balance requirements of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 apply to any committees and sub-committees established by the Assembly. This means that the allocation of seats on committees must be proportionate to the number of Members each party Group has on the Assembly as a whole.
- 5.3 Political proportionality must be applied to every ordinary and advisory committee or sub-committee established by the Assembly. The political balance requirements do not apply to the proposed EU Exit Working Group since it is not proposed that it is established as an ordinary sub-committee but as a working group under SO 8.5, and in accordance with the principles established by *R v Warwickshire District Council ex parte Bailey* [1991] COD 184.
- 5.4 As it is proposed that the EU Exit Working Group is established as a working group it is not formally subject to access to information rules, although the Assembly's views on the matter would always be made public in due course.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 The Working Group can be resourced from existing Secretariat budgets, subject to the number of meetings and any output required.

List of appendices to this report:

None

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of Background Papers:

None

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