

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

ECONOMY AND SKILLS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 06 MARCH 2024 AT 10:00 HOURS
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2, COUNCIL HOUSE, VICTORIA SQUARE,
BIRMINGHAM, B1 1BB

A G E N D A

1 NOTICE OF RECORDING/WEBCAST

The Chair to advise/meeting to note that this meeting will be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Public-I microsite ([please click this link](#)) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there are confidential or exempt items.

2 APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Members are reminded they must declare all relevant pecuniary and other registerable interests arising from any business to be discussed at this meeting.

If a disclosable pecuniary interest is declared a Member must not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless they have been granted a dispensation.

If other registerable interests are declared a Member may speak on the matter only if members of the public are allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless they have been granted a dispensation.

If it is a 'sensitive interest', Members do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that they have an interest.

Information on the Local Government Association's Model Councillor Code of Conduct is set out via <http://bit.ly/3WtGQnN>. This includes, at Appendix 1, an interests flowchart which provides a simple guide to declaring interests at meetings.

3 - 6

4 **MINUTES**

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 10th January 2024.

7 - 8

5 **ACTION TRACKER**

To note the action tracker.

6 **COMMISSIONER'S REVIEW AND COMMENTS ON THE AGENDA**

To note there were no comments on the agenda from the Commissioner.

9 - 14

7 **OUR FUTURE CITY 'CENTRAL BIRMINGHAM FRAMEWORK 2040' UPDATE**

To provide formal feedback on how the committee's representation to the Draft Our Future City Plan 'Central Birmingham Framework 2040,' has been considered and incorporated into the final framework.

Simon Delahunty-Forrest, Assistant Director (Development); James Betjemaan, Head of Curzon and Enterprise Zone Development; Timothy Brown, Principal Development Planning Officer – City Centre Team will be attendance for this item.

15 - 26

8 **WORK PROGRAMME**

To consider the Committee's work programme and agree any updates/amendments.

9 **REQUEST(S) FOR CALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS RECEIVED (IF ANY)**

To consider any request for call in/councillor call for action/petitions (if received).

10 **OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

To consider any items of business by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) that in the opinion of the Chair are matters of urgency.

11 **AUTHORITY TO CHAIR AND OFFICERS**

Chair to move:-

'In an urgent situation between meetings, the Chair jointly with the relevant Chief Officer has authority to act on behalf of the Committee'.

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

ECONOMY AND SKILLS O&S COMMITTEE

1000 hours on 10th January 2024, Committee Room 2, Council House

Present:

Councillors Katherine Iroh (Deputy Chair), Bushra Bi, Jon Hunt, Richard Parkin, Jamie Tennant and Lisa Trickett

Also Present:

Paul Kitson, Strategic Director, Places, Prosperity and Sustainability

Councillor Sir Albert Bore, Chair of Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Amelia Wiltshire, Overview and Scrutiny Manager

Baseema Begum, Scrutiny Officer

1. NOTICE OF RECORDING/WEBCAST

The Chair, Councillor Iroh, advised those present that the meeting would be webcast for live and subsequent broadcast and that Members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there are confidential or exempt items.

2. APOLOGIES

An apology was received from Councillor Akhlaq Ahmed.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest submitted.

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 6th December 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair, Councillor Iroh.

5. ACTION TRACKER

RESOLVED: That the action tracker be noted.

6. COMMISSIONER'S REVIEW AND COMMENTS ON THE AGENDA

RESOLVED: It was noted that no comments had been received.

7. ASSET DISPOSAL PROGRAMME AND CABINET PROPERTY COMMITTEE – SCRUTINY APPROACH

Paul Kitson, Strategic Director, Place, Prosperity & Sustainability was in attendance for this item.

The Chair, Cllr Iroh, outlined the purpose of the item explaining that it was about how the Committee could add value to the asset disposal programme. Cllr Iroh emphasised that there was a balance to be struck between providing effective scrutiny but also ensuring that this did not delay the timescale set for disposals to ensure that budget savings are met. It was added that this item followed on from comments made by the Lead Commissioner that was discussed at the last meeting relating to the work programme.

Cllr Iroh explained to Members that she had met with Cllr Brigid Jones, Cabinet Member for Finance who, in her capacity as a member of the Cabinet Committee – Property, agreed that it would be beneficial for the Committee to consider relevant reports such as specific asset disposals in advance of Cabinet decisions. Cllr Iroh advised that this may need to be in a private setting noting the confidentiality needed for commercial purposes. It was also stated that due diligence be undertaken by Scrutiny before Cabinet makes a decision could minimise any decisions 'called in'. Cllr Iroh added it would also be beneficial for the Committee to consider and review the performance of the asset disposal programme in due course as other Councils in a similar situation have done.

Finally, Cllr Iroh highlighted it was important to note that members of the Committee were not representative of the whole city and did not possess local knowledge. Therefore, there is a need for a process that can share proposed assets for sales in local areas with local councillors where local communities are impacted.

Amelia Wiltshire, Overview & Scrutiny Manager gave examples of how other local authorities under intervention had dealt with pre-decision scrutiny relating to the disposal of assets.

Cllr Bore added that a challenge for scrutiny committees moving forward in setting their work programmes is to ensure that they are able to capture the impact of budget decisions being made on service delivery. The process how scrutiny committees can do this effectively is being discussed.

Members then held a discussion, and the following were among the points made: -

- Commissioners have set a target for the disposal of assets and the Council is working towards this. Officers are meeting with them on a weekly basis to review key issues. Several larger assets have already been prepared for the market with the most immediate auction schedule for early February.
- Process needs to be agreed on how committee members will undertake pre-decision scrutiny on disposal of specific assets, this includes ensuring that members comments are noted and reported back to officers in a timely fashion.
- Officers suggested private sessions would need to be held in advance of Cabinet decision to discuss disposal of specific assets due to the commercial sensitivities. Members proposed holding informal meetings online for pre decision scrutiny to allow greater member participation and flexibility. It was understood that requests could be made at short notice with an immediate response required, and this would avoid any delays in the timescale set for disposals.
- Concern about the capacity and cost to administer the amount of sales required. There may be a need to buy in additional expertise alongside the fees to sell.
- There was support for ensuring greater transparency in decision making for the disposal of community assets. It was highlighted that such Cabinet discussions should be held in public. Officers should refer to specific neighbourhood plans in decision reports to ensure that they are aware of all possible issues and are able to address concerns ahead of engagement with residents.
- Local Members should be notified of proposed disposals as they have the best local knowledge. It would be beneficial to also have one point of contact both in notifying and receiving Member responses. Deadlines should be set for Members to respond by as there will be occasions where a speedy response is needed. Members were assured that there is a process to engage ward members.
- Residents should also have some means of sharing their views on assets of community value before decisions are taken.
- Further information on the schedule of sales and forecast sale and value rate will also be included at the proposed workshop, as well as more detail on the approach from officers. Members were assured that relevant officers were involved in the process including planners in ensuring the suitability for market.
- Notification of where there are delays to sales outside of the envisaged timeframe and the impact of not meeting targets would be beneficial in enabling the scrutiny committee to undertake its role more thoroughly.
- The Committee was assured that tracking of progress against targets is taking place operationally.
- There was concern about the loss of corporate memory loss in relation to particular sites with staff leaving the organisation and the impact of this. This was acknowledged and the Strategic Director for Place, Prosperity and Sustainability stated that the initial approach may require adapting and improving as the city moves through the programme of sales.

RESOLVED: -

1. That the report be noted.
2. That a workshop be set up on Asset Disposal with relevant officers in attendance. This should include a list of assets by ward, clarity on the process being carried out including notification to ward members and the role of the scrutiny committee.
3. That examples of reports detailing progress made on the disposal of assets in other Councils be shared with the Committee.

8. REQUEST(S) FOR CALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS RECEIVED (IF ANY)

There were no requests for Call In received.

9. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of other urgent business.

10. AUTHORITY TO CHAIR AND OFFICERS

Agreed.

The meeting ended at 11:03 hours.

ECONOMY AND SKILLS O&S COMMITTEE
ACTION TRACKER 2023-24

Date	Agenda Item	Action	Update
11 th October	Financial Challenges - Scrutiny Contribution to the Budget Saving and Recovery Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Further information to be provided on the process undertaken by CLT considering the new budget recognition challenge and the overall balancing of the budget at the next meeting. b) A delivery plan tracking fortnightly/monthly performance to ensure that the directorate and Council is operating within its means. c) Further information to be reported back on at the next meetings on progress made against savings targets for the following 4 key areas: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staffing costs (vacancy management); - What pieces of work can be paused and stopped; - In respect of third-party payments – what can be paused and stopped here; and d) - Income optimisation (what can we do to generate more). 	<p>It has been agreed that the Co-Ordinating & Finance O&S Committees have set up a Task & Finish Group to consider how the Council might close the in-year (2023-24) budget gap and how Scrutiny could contribute to the development of the Budget proposals for 2024-25. This T&F Group commenced its meeting in November and will conclude with a report to Cabinet later this month. All O&S Chairs are represented on this T&F Group, together with representatives from Opposition Groups.</p> <p>a) – c): This is being picked up and reported to the T&F Group.</p> <p>d): To be considered as part of informal meeting to consider future work programme on 10 January.</p>
11 th October	Financial Challenges - Scrutiny Contribution to the Budget Saving and Recovery Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) An outline of the strategy and rationalisation on the CAB estate including occupancy rates in CAB building over the past 12 months. b) Asset strategy and review with respect to smaller commercial properties and the disposal programme actual figures on what can be delivered realistically this year will be shared with Committee. 	<p>a): To be considered as part of informal meeting to consider future work programme on 10 January.</p> <p>b): To be picked up as part of Agenda item 7, OSC on 10 January 24.</p>

ECONOMY AND SKILLS O&S COMMITTEE
ACTION TRACKER 2023-24

Date	Agenda Item	Action	Update
11 th October	Implementation of Recommendations: Employment and Skills Inquiry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Financial information including live information will be provided at the next update. b) A letter to government has been drafted in relation to matters raised by young people during the Employment & Skills Inquiry with reference to education, careers advice and guidance and employment support. This is awaiting comment from the Cabinet Member and will be followed up. c) A request for Cabinet Member attendance for future monitoring reports will be made. d) The Committee agreed that the next report would be in 6 months' time and added to the work programme for April. 	<p>a), c)-d): Had been intended to be picked up in April as part of standard monitoring of inquiry. Committee to consider as part of informal meeting to consider future work programme on 10 January.</p> <p>b): Letter drafted and approved by Cabinet Member with changes. Pending Chair approval.</p>
10 th January	Asset Disposal Programme and Cabinet Property Committee – Scrutiny Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) A workshop to be set up with officers on Asset Disposal. This should include a list of assets by ward, clarity on the process being carried out including notification to ward members and the role of the scrutiny committee. b) Examples of reports detailing progress made on the disposal of assets in other Councils to be shared with the committee. 	<p>a) The Asset Disposal Workshop took place on 24 January.</p> <p>b) Information was circulated to the committee on 19 January.</p>

Birmingham City Council

Economy & Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee

6th March 2024



Subject: Our Future City 'Central Birmingham Framework 2040' Update

Report of: Simon Delahunty-Forrest, Assistant Director, Development

Report author: James Betjemann, Head of Curzon and Enterprise Zone Development

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To provide formal feedback on how the committee's representation to the Draft Our Future City Plan 'Central Birmingham Framework 2040,' has been considered and incorporated into the final framework. To also provide a summary on the key headlines to the committee from the formal Draft Framework engagement, out for 12-week consultation from May-August 2023.
- 1.2 Lead officers on the Our Future City Plan have engaged with the Scrutiny Committee since the 'Shaping Our City Together Engagement Document' 2021 and officers attended several meetings last year to provide a progress update.

Formal Representation

Comments from Birmingham City Council Economy and Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 12 July 2023. For Submission to the Our Future City Draft Central Birmingham Framework 2040 Consultation:

- 1.3 'The Committee supported the vision for the City to becoming a greener city of more jobs, better transport options and higher quality, energy efficient new homes and the focus that extended beyond the city centre. However, Members commented that the term 'central' may still be interpreted as city centre focussed and suggested that an alternative name for the strategy may better reflect the localities it covers. Members questioned the reliance on the property development model of development.
- 1.4 The Committee also wanted to understand the links with neighbourhood governance arrangements including Neighbourhood and Ward Plans and how communities will be genuinely engaged with the proposals. Community engagement must be integral at each stage of the proposals and development which will require time and resources. It was the view of the Committee that the

Our Future City Plan document should set out clearly how communities will be involved in the further development and delivery of the plan.

- 1.5 Members requested further information to come to the Committee on the economic, environmental and sustainability impact of the proposals.
- 1.6 It was noted that the framework sets out the connection with the Birmingham Transport Plan and the benefits of increase sustainable and active travel. The Committee want to ensure that the opportunities that will be created will be accessible to communities that have higher levels of disadvantage and that the implementation of the Our Future City Plan and the Birmingham Transport Plan are aligned.
- 1.7 Members also questioned the Council's policy on undeveloped held and unheld land. Members want the Council to be proactive in seeking opportunities to develop these to the benefit of local communities and achieving best value.
- 1.8 The Committee supported the proposals for high density housing that will provide better quality, community orientated houses with access to local green spaces.
- 1.9 The Committee highlighted the revenue implications for the Council and that the plan will need to be reviewed in line with the Council's financial plan. Members supported the use Section 106 agreements to cover the revenue costs of green spaces. It was noted that artists impressions in the plan are not an accurate representation and as a development progresses the revenue cost for the Council of maintaining trees may limit the planting schemes.'

Officer Response

- 1.10 The framework area goes beyond the Inner Ring Road, in recognition of the reality that 'Central Birmingham' comprises many destinations, centres and neighbourhoods each with their own offer, character and opportunities that can deliver growth across our communities. The framework is geographically grouped into five key areas:
- **City Heart:** Bull Ring, Colmore Business District, Snowhill and Steelhouse, Southside and Westside;
 - **Central North:** Eastside and Aston Triangle, Gun Quarter, Nechells and Newtown.
 - **Central East:** Bordesley, Digbeth and Small Heath;
 - **Central South:** Balsall Heath, Edgbaston and Highgate; &
 - **Central West:** Hockley, Jewellery Quarter, Ladywood and Spring Hill.
- 1.11 The OFC Central Birmingham Framework 2040 will be supported by an ongoing investment strategy. Much of the Framework's Delivery Plan is dependent on the existing Council strategies and investment plans which have informed the Framework's Bold Proposals, including the funding strategies that underpin them. These include the following.
- Housing Strategy (2023-2028);
 - Digital Strategy;

- Property Strategy;
 - Transport Delivery Plan.
- 1.12 An investment strategy for a Framework of this scale and scope will evolve over time as the programmes and projects required to deliver the Bold Proposals are shaped by the changing political and socio-economic landscape over the years.
- 1.13 In addition to the existing strategies that are shaping the investment strategy it's important to recognise the evolving political and socio-economic landscape that will inform the funding opportunities that will take it forward.
- 1.14 The 'Trailblazer Devolution Deal' announced in the Spring 2023 budget presents a significant opportunity for the West Midlands to shape and fund its own functional and place-based investment strategies. The Bold Proposals within this Framework align with the region's Functional strategies of:
- Housing and Regeneration;
 - Local Transport;
 - Adult Skills;
 - Local Growth and Place;
 - Retrofit.
- 1.15 Informing how these functions will be delivered will be a number of place-based strategies that will come together to bring about multi-year transformation and create critical masses of investment in specific geographies, or 'corridors', below the sub-regional level.
- 1.16 This Framework will be a key element within the place strategy for Birmingham and presents a significant opportunity to draw in investment for a number of the Bold Proposals. In addition to this overarching regional investment strategy there are also a number of place focussed investment programmes that will support the Framework's delivery plan. These include the Enterprise Zone which is already funding a number of the major development sites such as Smithfield. Other programmes include the Council's £1.4bn investment in housing to bring the stock up to decent standards and unlock new opportunities for investment, including in the Housing Action Areas.
- 1.17 The Birmingham Transport Plan (BTP) 2031 Delivery Plan aligns with the OFC Central Birmingham Framework transport ambitions and proposals in terms of delivering sustainable neighbourhoods that are well-served and connected by making it easier to travel by walking, cycling and public transport.
- 1.18 The OFC Framework has a clear vision for mobility which prioritises sustainable and accessible modes of transport including walking, cycling, buses and trains. The Birmingham Transport Plan 2031 contains a set of principles that will guide investment in the city's transport and deliver a number of the OFCP Bold Proposals. The BTP vision, driving transformational change through travel demand management, will produce a smart, innovative, carbon neutral and low emission network to support sustainable and inclusive economic success,

tackling the climate emergency, and promote the health and well-being of Birmingham's citizens.

1.19 From the outset the Central Birmingham Framework has considered all relevant adopted Area Action Plans, Supplementary Planning Documents, Masterplans and Neighbourhood Plans to ensure the delivery opportunities reflect the shared visions in the areas. Neighbourhood Plans as a result communities, landowners and key stakeholders will be empowered not only to shape and influence the strategy but also to play a leading role in delivery. Neighbourhood Plans become part of the development plan and the policies contained within them are then used in the determination of planning applications.

1.20 The OFC Central Birmingham Framework Cabinet Report will be accompanied by an Equalities Assessment and Environmental and Sustainability Assessment.

Formal Engagement Headlines

1.21 Prior to the formal consultation period, a stakeholder mapping exercise to identify the communities, stakeholders and partners who would be most impacted upon by the proposals. This also helped identify any 'seldom heard groups' across Birmingham allowing for a targeted approach towards engagement. This involved working with the council's Neighbourhood Development and Support Unit to identify key channels of communication within each of the wards covered by the plan, reaching out to organisations and community groups and using these networks to help promote the engagement.

1.22 The Draft Framework consultation was supported by a comprehensive engagement strategy. The strategy aimed to ensure all individuals and organisations in the city had the opportunity to have their say on the draft framework. The objectives of the consultation were to:

- Test the proposals within the draft framework;
- Spark debate and engagement with the entire community;
- Build market and business confidence;
- Show the city has opportunities and aspirations;
- Develop relationships with stakeholders and foster ongoing engagement; and build trust with the community.

1.23 The headlines from the consultation were:

- 20 consultation events across the city – spoke to over 800 people;
- 330 formal representations received;
- 250 responses via BeHeard;
- 80 emails received;
- Online workshops – approx. 90 people engaged.

1.24 The final framework will strengthen the wording on:

- The need to deliver a mix of type and tenure to meet the identified local need and for houses to be affordable and sustainable;
- Safety and creating safe accessible spaces and active travel routes;
- Sustainability, route to zero carbon emissions, climate change mitigation and increasing biodiversity;
- The need to protect and enhance heritage and cultural assets through a new heritage and culture chapter for each area section (City Heart, Central East, North, South and West);
- The bold proposals within each chapter have been streamlined and reordered to improve consistency throughout the document;
- The Delivery chapter to provide a greater level of detail on projects and delivery mechanisms including ongoing community engagement; & also
- Minor amendments to growth zone boundaries to reflect responses.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 For the committee to note the feedback provided on the representation and how this will be incorporated into the final OFCP Central Framework 2040 going to Cabinet on 14th May.

3 Any Finance Implications

- 3.1 These will be considered by the formal Cabinet Report.

4 Any Legal Implications

- 4.1 These will be considered by the formal Cabinet Report.

5 Any Equalities Implications

- 5.1 The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:
- 5.1.1 eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
 - 5.1.2 advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - 5.1.3 foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 5.2 The Committee should ensure that it addresses these duties by considering them during work programme development, the scoping of work, evidence gathering and making recommendations. This should include considering: How policy issues impact on different groups within the community, particularly those that share a relevant protected characteristic; Whether the impact on particular groups is fair and proportionate; Whether there is equality of access to services and fair representation of all groups within Birmingham; Whether any positive

opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and/or good relations between people are being realised.

- 5.3 The Committee should ensure that equalities comments, and any recommendations, are based on evidence. This should include demographic and service level data and evidence of residents/service-users views gathered through consultation.

6 Appendices

- 6.1 N/A

Birmingham City Council

Economy and Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee

6 March 2024



Subject: Economy and Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme

Report of: Christian Scade, Head of Scrutiny and Committee Services

Report author: Amelia Wiltshire, Overview and Scrutiny Manager
 amelia.murray@birmingham.gov.uk
 07825 979253

1 Purpose

- 1.1 This report sets out the proposed work programme for the Economy and Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2023-24. Following the findings and recommendations from the independent Governance Review of the Council, and specifically recommendation 5, the Committee has reframed its work programme to be aligned to the Council's improvement and recovery priorities. Appendix 1 outlines the topics identified, aims and objectives as well as the preferred method of scrutiny to achieve these objectives.
- 1.2 Appendix 1 also provides information on other topics, which had previously been identified by the Committee for future consideration.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Committee:
 - Notes the information set out in Appendix 1 and identifies if any further topics need to be added aligned to the Council's improvement and recovery priorities.
 - Agrees, subject to further input from the Chair and Deputy Chair, the issues that the Committee will consider in April 2024, the proposed aims and objectives and the preferred method of scrutiny.
 - Notes, subject to further input from the Chair and Deputy Chair outside of the meeting, its proposed work programme will be submitted to Co-

ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee to enable work to be planned and co-ordinated throughout the year.

3 Background

3.1 The [statutory guidance for local government overview and scrutiny](#) sets out the role it can play in holding an authority's decision makers to account. This makes it fundamentally important to the successful functioning of local democracy.

3.2 Effective Overview and Scrutiny should:

- Provide constructive 'critical friend' challenge.
- Amplify the voices and concerns of the public.
- Be led by independent people who take responsibility for their role.
- Drive improvements in public services.

3.3 The role and functions of Overview and Scrutiny Committees are outlined in [The City Council's Constitution | Birmingham City Council](#) They will:

- Make reports and/or recommendations to the full Council, the Executive and/or other organisations in connection with the discharge of the functions specified in their terms of reference.
- Consider any matter covered in their terms of reference that may affect or be likely to have an effect on the citizens of Birmingham; relevant to the Council's strategic objectives; relevant to major issues faced by officers in managing a function of the Council; and likely to make contribution to moving the Council forward and achieving key performance targets.

3.4 Effective scrutiny needs to add value. A well planned and timely work programme enables Overview and Scrutiny Committees to be involved at the right time and in the right way, and ensure their involvement is meaningful and can influence the outcome.

3.5 Members often have a number of topics suggested to them and are therefore required to **prioritise** matters for consideration. The Scrutiny Framework sets out the following factors to be considered:

- Public interest: concerns of local people should influence the issues chosen.
- Ability to change: priority should be given to issues that the Committee can realistically influence.
- Performance: priority should be given to areas in which the Council and Partners are not performing well.
- Extent: priority should be given to issues that are relevant to all or a large part of the city.
- Replication: work programme must take account of what else is happening to avoid duplication.

Looking Ahead

- 3.6 Since June 2023, Overview and Scrutiny Committees have identified a 'menu' of issues (including policy development, policy review, issues of accountability and statutory functions). Each Committee has then regularly reviewed their 'menu' and decided which issues needed to be examined further, and how that work would be undertaken.

Scrutiny Methods

- 3.7 There are a range of ways to undertake scrutiny. The approach for 2023-24 enables flexible scrutiny and outlines a shift from monthly formal meetings to a combination of approaches. The Committee will choose the most effective scrutiny method to achieve the desired aims and objectives for each topic.
- 3.8 Scrutiny activities should be thorough and undertaken in a timely manner.
- 3.9 Based on Statutory Guidance published in 2019, different scrutiny methods include (but are not limited to):
- A single item, or items, on a committee agenda – this method fits more closely with the "overview" aspect of the Scrutiny function and provides limited opportunity for effective scrutiny. It is most appropriate for specific issues where the committee wants to maintain a watching brief.
 - A single item meeting, either as the committee or a more limited number of Members. It has the capacity to enhance the previous option by taking evidence from a number of witnesses.
 - A task and finish day - provided that these are properly focused, they ensure Councillors can swiftly reach conclusions and make recommendations and are effective even for complex topics.
 - A task and finish review – this is an enhancement of the previous option being held over four or six meetings spread over a limited number of months.

Economy and Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 3.10 The Committee's Terms of Reference is to fulfil the functions of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee as they relate to any policies, services and activities concerning:
- major physical regeneration and infrastructure projects in the city (with Cabinet Member for Housing & Homelessness)
 - promotion of the city and inward investment (with the Cabinet Member for Digital, Culture, Heritage and Tourism)
 - land use and property assets
 - economic growth and jobs
 - skills expansion for key growth sectors along with lifelong learning for post-14 skills and lifelong learning
 - access to employment and delivery of local employment plans
 - economic impact of arts, culture, tourism and sport

3.11 The Committee is chaired by Councillor Akhlaq Ahmed, and its membership comprises Councillors Bushra Bi, Jon Hunt, Katherine Iroh, Simon Morrall, Richard Parkin, Jamie Tennant and Lisa Trickett.

4 The Governance Review – Reframing the Work Programme 2023-24

4.1 The Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 15 December 2023 acknowledged the recommendations in the Governance Review of Birmingham City Council agreed by Cabinet on 12 December 2023. Recommendation 5 stated the need to reframe scrutiny work programmes on the Council's improvement and recovery priorities, and that alignment of work programmes should focus on:

- a) Having an active part in the 2024/25 budget development process.
- b) The safe and effective delivery of key services supporting vulnerable people.
- c) Critical performance issues emerging "by exception".
- d) Equality and equity issues arising from the development of the 24/25 Budget, the Emergency Budget (to be identified by exception), and other priority scrutiny activity relating to the Budget.
- e) Culture, behaviour change and organisational development.

4.2 On 10 January 2024, the Economy and Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee met informally to consider the developing Improvement and Recovery Plan and the findings and recommendations of the Governance Review. The Committee reconsidered its work programme for January - April and reframed it to ensure it aligns with the issues set out above.

4.3 Following this informal session, the Committee has had further informal briefings in February 2024 on:

- the proposed budget for 23-24 and specifically how the Place, Prosperity and Sustainability Directorate is mobilising to deliver these services; and
- informing a new performance management framework.

4.4 Appendix 1 sets out the current agreed work programme from March onwards.

4.5 The Committee may decide to add further items to the work programme during the remainder of the year. When considering this, the Committee is advised to consider where it can best add value through scrutiny aligning to the Council's priorities and improvement journey, and how it can prioritise topics for consideration based on the Scrutiny Framework referred to in paragraph 3.5 above.

4.6 The Council's latest [Forward Plan February 2024](#) may assist Members in identifying future topics. The following reports are of particular relevance to this Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

Reference	Title	Portfolio	Proposed Date of Decision
012489/2024	Response to Budget Scrutiny Task and Finish Group Report	Leader	27 Feb 24
011780/2023	Sale of the Brasshouse, 50 Sheepcote Street, Birmingham B16 8AJ	Leader	29 Feb 24
012506/2024	Proposed Sale of Property Assets – Standing Item	Leader	29 Feb 24
012505/2024	Proposed Sale of Surplus Freehold Property Assets by Public Auction – Standing Item	Leader	01 Mar 24
012048/2024	Higher Level Skills Match Plus (HLSM+) Project Full Business Case and Investment Report	Deputy Leader	19 Mar 24
012342/2024	West Midlands Investment Zone	Deputy Leader	19 Mar 24
012520/2024	Improvement and Recovery Plan	Deputy Leader	19 Mar 24
011840/2023	Enterprise Zone Programme Management Levy	Leader	19 Mar 24
012592/2024	Section 151 Officer Update on the Financial Position of the Council – March 2024	Leader	19 Mar 24
012487/2024	Sale of Moilliett Street Park	Finance and Resources	28 Mar 24
009483/2022	Disposal of Surplus Properties	Leader	28 Mar 24
012121/2024	Perry Barr Residential Scheme - Disposal of Plots 2, 3, 4 & 5	Leader	28 Mar 24
012358/2024	Proposed Sale of Surplus Freehold Property Assets by Public Auction	Leader	28 Mar 24
012432/2024	Revision of terms of Head Lease for 10 Gough Street, Birmingham	Leader	28 Mar 24
012550/2024	Disposal of Council Owned Land at Bordesley Park	Leader	28 Mar 24
011225/2023	Knowledge Quarter – Woodcock Street	Leader	28 Mar 24
007686/2020	Historic Environment Supplementary Planning Document	Leader	23 Apr 24
012094/2024	Highbury Hall and Grounds Refurbishment and Renovation Project	Leader	23 Apr 24
012248/2024	UKSPF Annual Progress Update 2024	Leader	23 Apr 24
012260/2024	NEC Masterplan and Property Strategy	Leader	08 May 24
010173/2022	Our Future City Plan 2040 – Draft Central Birmingham Framework	Leader	14 May 24
012296/2024	Birmingham Local Plan – Preferred Options Consultation	Leader	14 May 24

012554/2024	Enterprise Zone Assurance Governance Framework	Leader	14 May 24
010635/2023	Paradise Phase 3	Leader	25 Jun 24

- 4.7 Overview and Scrutiny Chairs are advised to maintain regular engagement with Cabinet Members to enable flexibility to be built into the Overview and Scrutiny work programme, so as to respond to the Council's policy priorities in a timely way.

5 Any Finance Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations set out in this report.

6 Any Legal Implications

- 6.1 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations set out in this report.

7 Any Equalities Implications

- 7.1 The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 7.2 The protected characteristics and groups outlined in the Equality Act are Age; Disability; Gender Reassignment; Marriage and Civil Partnership; Pregnancy and Maternity; Race; Religion and Belief; Sex, and Sexual Orientation.
- 7.3 The Committee should ensure that it addresses these duties by considering them during work programme development, the scoping of work, evidence gathering and making recommendations. This should include considering how policy issues impact on different groups within the community, particularly those that share a relevant protected characteristic; whether the impact on particular groups is fair and proportionate; whether there is equality of access to services and fair representation of all groups within Birmingham; and whether any positive opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and/or good relations between people are being realised.
- 7.4 The Committee should ensure that equalities comments, and any recommendations, are based on evidence. This should include demographic and service level data and evidence of residents/service-users views gathered through consultation.

8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1: Work Programme 2023-24 - March

9 Background Papers

9.1 [Birmingham City Council Constitution](#)

9.2 Birmingham City Council Overview and Scrutiny Framework April 2021

Economy and Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2023 / 24

Month	Item/Topic Link with Corporate Priorities	Aims and Objectives	Scrutiny Method	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer	Other Witnesses	Additional Information and Outcome*
March	<p>Our Future City Plan 2040 – Draft Central Birmingham Framework 2040 (TBC)</p> <p>CGFS Independent Governance Review recommendation 5: Equality and equity issues arising from the development of the 24/25 budget; the Emergency budget (to be identified by exception) and other priority scrutiny activity relating to the budget.</p>	To outline the current position of the Framework, including a response to the feedback from the O&S Committee during the consultation.	<p>Committee meeting – single item.</p> <p>Deadline for reports: 27 February 2024</p>	Paul Kitson, Strategic Director, Place, Prosperity and Sustainability	<p>James Betjeman, Head of Curzon and Enterprise Zone Development</p> <p>Timothy Brown, Principal Development Planning Officer – City Centre Team</p>	Report due to be presented to Cabinet on 14 May 2024.
April	<p>Asset Disposal Programme</p> <p>CGFS Independent Governance Review recommendation 5: Equality and equity issues arising from the development of the 24/25 budget; the Emergency budget (to be identified by exception) and other priority</p>	Review the progress of the Asset Disposal Programme	<p>Committee Meeting single item.</p> <p>Deadline for reports: 9 April 2024</p> <p>Venue: Council House,</p>	Paul Kitson, Strategic Director, Place, Prosperity and Sustainability	<p>Philip Nell, Director Property & Investment</p> <p>Kathryn James, Assistant Director of Investment and Valuation</p>	This will be the first report and will continue to be reported to the Committee quarterly thereafter. The next report will be scheduled in July.

	scrutiny activity relating to the budget.		Committee Room 2			
April	<p>Budget Challenge and Financial Recovery</p> <p>CGFS Independent Governance Review recommendation 5: Equality and equity issues arising from the development of the 24/25 budget; the Emergency budget (to be identified by exception) and other priority scrutiny activity relating to the budget.</p>	<p>Track the progress on savings made to date.</p> <p>Consider the impact of savings on policy and service delivery.</p> <p>Consider how relevant services are mobilising to delivery budget savings for 24-25 and agree how the Committee will monitor these savings.</p>	<p>Committee Meeting single item.</p> <p>Deadline for reports: 27 February 2024</p> <p>Venue: Council House, Committee Room 2</p>	TBC	TBC	<p>This will be specific to the remit of this Committee.</p> <p>This will be a standard agenda across all Overview and Scrutiny Committees.</p>

*Outcome: This will be populated once the item/topic has been completed. It will identify the added value and impact.

Menu of Issues for Consideration

The following items had been identified as potential topics for future consideration. This approach enables the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to remain flexible and respond in a timely manner to emerging issues.

This is a live work programme work programme. New items may be added, or items removed during the course of the year. Proposed aims and objectives as well as scrutiny methodology may also be subject to change.

Item/ Topic	Proposed Aims and Objectives	Proposed Scrutiny Method	Additional Information
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Local Enterprise Zones and Business Rates Maximisation	Consider how Birmingham can maximise the income opportunities through these zones to drive wider economic benefits for the city.	Committee meeting – single agenda item	This fits under Independent Governance Review recommendation 5: Equality and equity issues arising from the development of the 24/25 budget; the Emergency budget (to be identified by exception) and other priority scrutiny activity relating to the budget.
All items below were identified by the Economy and Skills O&S Committee before the Independent Governance Review was published in December 2023, and its subsequent and related review of its work programme. The below items are included to be considered in light of the Governance Review as part of the work programme planning for 2023-24.			
Young People and Skills	<p>To understand the views of young people to inform the work of the Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>To report back on the implementation of the recommendations of the Employment and Skills Scrutiny Inquiry.</p>	Informal meeting – date/ time to be confirmed	<p>This session will involve members of the Youth City Board. Members of this board had contributed to the Scrutiny Inquiry.</p> <p>Members of the Education and CYP OSC could be invited to attend.</p>
Employers	To understand how Birmingham City Council can support local businesses.	Link with existing meeting / event	During the evidence gathering for the Employment and Skills Inquiry, there had been an intention to hear evidence from the business sector. This had not been possible. As part of its conclusions, therefore, the inquiry report had indicated that it would be useful to still meet with business. This could have a wider focus than youth employment.
CWG Employment Legacy	Aims and Objectives to be determined.	To be determined.	Neighbourhoods O&S Committee has Commonwealth Games Legacy Framework as part of its remit. All other Committees will consider specific areas of Games legacy as relevant to their Terms of Reference.

Night-time economy	Aims and Objectives to be determined.	To be determined.	Following consideration of the Birmingham Development Plan to consider the issues experienced by communities as a result of the night- time economy and how these can be managed / mitigated in future developments.
East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy	To update on the implementation of the East Birmingham Growth Strategy.	Committee meeting – single item	This will follow on from the most recent presentation to the Committee on 26 April 2023 . The Committee had requested 6 monthly updates. It is anticipated that the next update will be available in March/April.
Scrutiny of Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)	To scrutinise the integration of the LEP functions into Birmingham City Council including administration of the legacy funds and Enterprise Zone.	Committee Meeting - single item	The LEP Scrutiny function no longer exists and there is an expectation that individual local authority arrangements will scrutinise the LEP Integration. Link to Cabinet report 27 June on LEP Integration into Birmingham City Council: Document.ashx (cmis.uk.com)
Monitoring Recommendations of the Employment and Skills Scrutiny Inquiry	Track progress on recommendations of the Employment and Skills Scrutiny Inquiry	Committee Meeting - single item	Recommendations were agreed at Council in April 2023. This is part of the standard inquiry tracking programme. It will be the second time the inquiry reports to Committee.

Scrutiny Method Options:

Committee meeting - single item

Committee meeting - single theme

Task and Finish Group (outline number of meetings)

On location

Other - (describe)

Corporate Priorities, Performance and Outcomes

Corporate Priorities 2022 – 26:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 Support inclusive economic growth | 11 Increase affordable, safe, green housing |
| 2 Tackle unemployment | 12 Tackle homelessness |
| 3 Attract inward investment and infrastructure | 13 Tackle health inequalities |
| 4 Maximise the benefits of the Commonwealth Games | 14 Encourage and enable physical activity and healthy living |
| 5 Tackle poverty and inequalities | 15 Champion mental health |
| 6 Empower citizens and enable citizen voice | 16 Improve outcomes for adults with disabilities and older people |
| 7 Promote and champion diversity, civic pride and culture | 17 Improve street cleanliness |
| 8 Support and enable all children and young people to thrive | 18 Improve air quality |
| 9 Make the city safer | 19 Continue on the Route to Zero |
| 10 Protect and safeguard vulnerable citizens | 20 Be a City of Nature |
| | 21 Delivering a Bold Best in Class Council |

Information on the Corporate Priorities, Performance and City Outcomes was reported to the Economy and Skills OSC in June 23: [Document.ashx \(cmis.uk.com\)](https://cmis.uk.com)