

**BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL**

**ECONOMY AND SKILLS O&S COMMITTEE**

**1000 hours on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024, Committee Room 2, Council House**

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**Present:**

Councillors Katherine Iroh (Chair), Bushra Bi, Jon Hunt, Richard Parkin, Jamie Tennant

**Also Present:**

Simon Delahunty-Forrest, Assistant Director (Development)

James Betjemaan, Head of Curzon and Enterprise Zone Development

Timothy Brown, Principal Development Planning Officer – City Centre

Fiona Wiltshire, Senior Overview and Scrutiny Manager

Baseema Begum, Scrutiny Officer

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**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.

Cllr Iroh confirmed that she was appointed Chair of Economy & Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the meeting of the City Council on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

**2. APOLOGIES**

An apology was received from Councillor Lisa Trickett.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest submitted.

**4. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024 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. OUR FUTURE CITY 'CENTRAL BIRMINGHAM FRAMEWORK 2040' UPDATE**

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

The Assistant Director, Development set out the context and background outlining the Committee's involvement in the consultation process in May 2023.

The Head of Curzon and Enterprise Zone Development detailed the Committee's involvement in the engagement and consultation process and confirmed that a report on the framework was scheduled to be presented to Cabinet in May. Once Cabinet has agreed the report it would be published as a final framework and Scrutiny involvement will continue as part of this.

The Principal Development Planning Officer (City Centre Team) clarified the timeline in the run up to the report being finalised for Cabinet in May and confirmed that equality and sustainability assessments had been carried out.

A discussion was then held with Members and the following were among the points made: -

- Ensuring that resident's vision and ward plans were considered as part of the wider vision of the Framework and ensuring that these fit in and work with key central Council strategies.
- Engaging and increasing participation with residents by using more digital means such as TikTok as well as providing information in different languages to help reach a wider audience.
- Officers clarified that the ethos of the Framework was ensuring that the city was being shaped together with residents inclusively and 800 representations were received although it was acknowledged that this was relative in relation to the population. Engagement with young people especially was explored through social media and this resulted in 128,000 people being reached.
- There should be a statement of community engagement that sets out how communities will be involved in the implementation of the OFCP framework. This should include how residents in the communities affected will be involved in governance and accountability.

- The pre-cabinet discussion on the Jewellery Quarter Neighbourhood Plan was highlighted as good practice and officers were supportive of this approach. Information sessions for Members pre-Cabinet are also planned.
- Members were assured that culture and heritage was considered as a distinct theme in the consultation process. It was imperative that due to the financial position of the Council that local assets of importance to residents are protected and preserved through use of statutory policies and tools available to the Council. It was explained that a multi-disciplinary approach was being taken so that the Council works with businesses and key stakeholders to safeguard heritage assets by using the local planning process.
- The financial position of the Council and how this would be incorporated into the Framework was raised due to the changing priorities and that there would be no funding for ward plans. It was explained that other avenues of funding were being considered such as Growth Zones, Enterprise Zones and the Levelling Up Fund to tackle this for the most deprived areas. Costs have been kept down with businesses having endorsed the vision and have provided in-kind support.
- Members raised economic, environmental and sustainability impacts of the framework and whether risk assessments had been completed for the Cabinet to consider alongside consideration of the risk of the Council's current financial position.
- Members were informed that the Council will consider projects in more detail and look at what can be done to make a difference in the current financial climate. As part of this the input from the private sector to deliver especially in relation to housing is key.
- Analysis of the responses and feedback from the public consultation were considered and changes have been made. This will form part of the report to Cabinet. This includes equality and sustainability considerations.
- As part of the governance of funding for projects and interventions that receive funding social value consideration is required. Additionally, the Council's own Charter for Social Responsibility is a requirement for all partners and contractors working with the Council to adhere to including as part of delivery on key projects.
- Officers confirmed that the funding landscape at both local and regional level had changed since the economic benefits were considered when the Framework was first presented to the Committee. Economic impacts will now be carried out through the Place Based Strategy and the Single Funding settlement. Each intervention for funding and delivery will have its own economic impact process undertaken.
- A workshop will be held that will review each project to see if they are financially viable and that the outcome of this would be shared with Members.

**RESOLVED: -**

1. That the report be noted.

2. That an informal meeting is held with the Committee for consideration of the report to Cabinet. Further information will be shared on the feedback from the public consultation.

## **8. WORK PROGRAMME**

The Chair outlined the items for the April meeting.

It was confirmed that an informal session would be held on 20<sup>th</sup> March to undertake pre-decision scrutiny on assets for disposal to be considered at Cabinet Committee Property on 28<sup>th</sup> March. Invitations will be sent to Members.

### **RESOLVED: -**

1. That the report be noted.
2. An informal meeting to undertake pre-decision scrutiny on 20<sup>th</sup> March was agreed.

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

There were no requests for Call In received.

## **10. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

The Chair proposed the election of a Deputy Chair as there was a vacancy following Cllr Iroh becoming Chair. Cllr Tennant was proposed and agreed as Deputy Chair.

## **11. AUTHORITY TO CHAIR AND OFFICERS**

Agreed.

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The meeting ended at 11:08 hours.

### Informal Meeting

Paul Kitson, Strategic Director, Places, Prosperity and Sustainability was present for this item.

- Arrange a meeting with new Strategic Director and Philip Nell (for 17<sup>th</sup> April committee).
- On 20<sup>th</sup> March PK confirmed that he will be able to give an idea of numbers in terms of VR.
- PK to confirm other admin building under scope.