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**Subject:** East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Programme Update  
**Report of:** Simon Delahunty-Forrest, Assistant Director, Development  
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## **1 Purpose**

- 1.1 To update the Committee on progress in relation to the East Birmingham and North Solihull (EBNS) Inclusive Growth agenda.

## **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 To note the update in relation to the East Birmingham and North Solihull (EBNS) Inclusive Growth agenda.

## **3 Any Finance Implications**

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

## **4 Any Legal Implications**

- 4.1 There are no direct legal implications associated with this report.

## **5 Any Equalities Implications**

- 5.1 There are no direct equalities implications associated with this report.

## **6 Appendices**

- 1: East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Programme Update report.

**26<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

**Economy & Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Programme Update**



**1. Introduction**

1.1. This report is to:

1.1.1. update the Economy & Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee on progress with respect to the East Birmingham and North Solihull (EBNS) Inclusive Growth agenda following the most recent previous report in July 2022.

1.1.2. provide a further update on progress towards the East Birmingham Programme objectives.

**2. Background**

2.1. Previous reports to this committee have stated that the Enhanced Business Case for the East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Programme (the Programme) was agreed by the City Council's Cabinet during July 2021. The purpose of the Programme is to begin delivery of the East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy (EBIGS) which was approved by Cabinet in February 2021 following extensive public engagement.

2.2. The approved Enhanced Business Case is for an initial phase of work covering the period 2021/22 - 2024/25. At the end of this funding period there will be a review of the programme and a further business case will be prepared for the next phase

2.3. The focus for the East Birmingham Programme is on holistic regeneration: the delivery of physical development and infrastructure, systems change/organisational transformation, and inclusive economic growth that will benefit the target population.

2.4. The Programme is overseen by the East Birmingham Board which is chaired by Liam Byrne MP and provides direction and support in the delivery of the East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy. The key objectives of the Board are to deliver growth and to bring forward a range of collaborative interventions to enable residents to shape outcomes and benefit from the jobs and opportunities created. The Board met most recently in March 2023 and will meet next on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

2.5. The Programme Objectives for the period 2021-41 are as follows:

- Improve performance to achieve at least the national average measures across a range of key socio-economic indicators including the seven objectives set out in the East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy.
- Deliver 5,000 homes within the area, of which a minimum of 35% will be at least affordable\*.
- Create at least 10,000 jobs within the area which will pay the Real Living Wage
- Support the Council's aspiration to be net carbon neutral by 2030, or as soon after as a just transition permits.

**3.**

## **4. Progress Since Previous Update**

- 4.1. Programme activity is described below under three headings:

**Programme Development:** activities that will deliver new funding, partnerships and better joined up working as well as opportunities to increase the scale and pace of delivery and to ensure the sustainability of the Programme beyond its current funding horizon.

**Project Delivery:** specific project activities led by the Programme team or in collaboration with internal and external partners. The overall purpose of the programme is transformational – as such, whilst there is an element of direct delivery alongside a strong emphasis on facilitating positive and self-sustaining change.

**Community wealth building, engagement and neighbourhood working:** engaging with Ward Members and local stakeholders including third sector organisations to empower and support East Birmingham communities in creating a stronger local economy and better place making including unlocking assets and improving green and blue infrastructure.

### **Programme Development**

#### **Levelling Up Zone and Investment Zones**

- 4.2. Since the previous report to this committee, proposals for an East Birmingham & North Solihull Levelling Up Zone have been developed collaboratively with West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) and Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC). The concept of the Levelling Up Zone is that strategic investment and interventions in transport infrastructure will unlock and accelerate a package of major development sites which will in turn stimulate further private sector investment. In parallel, the integration of public services will ensure that local people benefit from the investment, with services being more effectively targeted at those who most benefit from improved access to jobs, higher wages and better health outcomes. A joint letter from the WM Mayor and both Council Leaders was submitted to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities in Autumn 2022 setting out this EBNS proposal.
- 4.3. In September 2022 the Government announced a competitive process for the creation of new Investment Zones with an expression of interest (EOI) process taking place from 3rd to 14th October. In response, Birmingham and Solihull Councils together submitted proposals for an EBNS opportunity area. The EOI was accompanied by a covering letter, co-signed by the Leaders of Birmingham and Solihull Councils and the Mayor of the West Midlands, setting out how the Investment Zone proposals could form part of a wider Levelling Up Zone concept.
- 4.4. Following the Spring Budget announcements in March 2023, the Government published the agreed text of the West Midlands Combined Authority: “Trailblazer” deeper Devolution Deal. The Devolution Deal text includes support for WMCA to progress multiple Levelling Up Zones, including EBNS, and a number of key “tools” are outlined to facilitate this, including business rate retention to support investment

in infrastructure and development. This could function in a similar manner to Birmingham's highly successful Enterprise Zone.

- 4.5. At the same time as the Devolution Deal text the Government also launched its Investment Zones policy prospectus. The Investment Zone policy differs significantly from the concept which was announced in September 2022, and there is no direct response to the EBNS EOI, however the prospectus does identify the WMCA as one of eight places which have been selected to develop more detailed Investment Zone proposals.

### **Strategic partnerships**

- 4.6. Current partnership activity includes:

- Establishing a new strategic alliance at Tyseley with University of Birmingham and Tyseley Energy Park Ltd. building on existing investment successes to deliver a new Green Energy and Innovation Quarter for Birmingham.
- Developing partnership working with the National Trust to pioneer approaches to inclusive urban greening.
- Engaging with Severn Trent to further develop their current involvement in the area which currently includes cost of living support, careers engagement and support for the Hodge Hill schools Earthshot project.
- Working with Birmingham City University (BCU) to co-design a further phase of work following the success of the previous BCU/City Council community engagement pilot.
- Working in collaboration with the NHS including:
  - the co-design and implementation of the East Birmingham Locality forum which has focussed on community access to green infrastructure and increased integration of health and social care in alignment with Early Intervention principles.
  - Collaboration around the Meadway Local Centre project where a Strategic Outline Case is under preparation for health provision as one potential component of a new local centre.
  - Supporting the Birmingham Anchor Network recruitment project, 'I Can', that has changed recruitment processes to remove unnecessary requirements and better value local applicants, leading to over 200 NHS job offers to East Birmingham residents so far.

### **Programme Team Recruitment**

- 4.7. Recruitment of the programme team continues, with five officers currently in post and a further three to be recruited imminently which will complete the current team structure. Graduate and apprenticeship placements are to be established later in 2023.

### **Project Delivery**

- 4.8. The Programme currently includes seven live projects. Further detail regarding these projects is provided in the Project Register appended to this report.
- EB007: Bordesley Spatial Pilot

- EB009: Dolphin Centre Youth Hub
- EB010: Cole Valley Country Parks (inc. Tyseley Community Commons)
- EB014: Pocket Parks
- EB015: Youth Employability Pilot (Partnerships for People & Place)
- EB017: Green Infrastructure Action Plan
- EB018: Asset-Led Delivery Vehicle Stage 2
- EB019: Meadway Phase 2

4.9. Additional projects are in the process of development including subsequent stages of activity aligned with the completed projects EB002: Ward End/Cole Valley Skills Hub, EB005: Community Engagement Pilot, EB003: Meadway Local Centre and EB004: Tyseley Clean Energy Masterplan for Growth.

### **Community wealth building, engagement and neighbourhood working activities**

4.10. The Programme team are engaged on an ongoing basis with stakeholders and communities across the East Birmingham area. Specific areas of focus include:

#### **Ward End**

4.11. The USE-IT Transfer Network project (EB001) has allowed for the local wealth building methodology to be tested with Ward End as an initial pilot area. To date the following activities have been delivered:

- One of the main Ward End community assets - Dolphin Women's Centre – received consultancy support in setting up their social enterprise café (business planning and customer engagement).
- In collaboration with Birmingham City University two Community Research projects have been commissioned that focus on 1) mapping the local underutilised skills and understanding the local barriers to employment and 2) better use of the local assets (Ward End Park House and the Boat House).
- The first Community Economic Development Plan was designed for Ward End identifying issues and opportunities such as under-utilised skills within the local population, especially women's skills, and local assets that can be used for the further development if the local economy are empowered to access them.
- This work led to a further collaboration with the WMCA Social Economy Task Force and resulted in the consideration of Ward End for the WMCA Social Economy Clusters funding (£50,000). It is hoped that the WMCA funding will allow further economic development of Ward End.

These activities will inform next steps building on the EB009: Dolphin Centre Youth Hub, the improvement of Ward End Park, social value emerging from major developments including the HS2 control centre and rolling stock yard, and the potential renovation of Ward End Park House.

#### **Bromford Regeneration**

4.12. The Programme Team is working with local stakeholders to support community aspirations and to facilitate joined-up engagement around the various activities currently underway in the area, including Environment Agency flood mitigation measures, City Council housing renewal, housing retrofit and improvement projects.

#### **Playzones consultation**

- 4.13. The programme team has supported the Council's Sport and Leisure service to undertake engagement with communities in support of a planned bid to the Football Foundation's Playzones funding programme. The aim was to identify opportunities for improved sports facilities and to explore local community capacity to help manage and operate the improved facilities. Proposals are now in development for three locations in East Birmingham, for submission to the Football Foundation in May 2023.

#### **Neighbourhood Planning and Business Improvement Districts**

- 4.14. The programme team is working with the Council's Neighbourhood Development and Support Unit (NDSU) to support community activities relating to the potential establishment of a Neighbourhood Planning Forum and/or a Business Improvement District for the Small Heath and Ward End areas.

### **5. Next Steps**

#### **Levelling Up**

- 5.1. Collaborative working with WMCA and Solihull Council will continue with the aim of securing new tools, funding and opportunities to scale up delivery as rapidly as possible. One key element of this work will be to establish a clear plan for the spatial delivery of growth and infrastructure across EBNS that will be enabled by the Levelling Up Zone, and to design the wider interventions that will ensure that the benefits are maximised for the community of East Birmingham.

#### **Further development of Strategic Partnerships**

- 5.2. The Programme Team is seeking to expand and to bring together our strategic partnerships, identify synergy and measure impact across three main pillars: employment and local jobs creation, local entrepreneurship and better place making through an improved use of assets (land, buildings, green and blue infrastructure) and community empowerment. This approach will also provide a platform for securing funding and finance for the programme by creating investable opportunities and raising the profile of East Birmingham.

#### **Establishment of EBNS Employment and Skills Insight and Integration Board**

- 5.3. Discussions are underway with stakeholders to establish a new forum to bring together the existing East Birmingham Jobs and Skills Taskforce (led by WMCA) and East Employment and Skills Board (led by The Pioneer Group). Currently new joint Terms of Reference are being prepared and progress will be presented to the May 2023 East Birmingham Board. Members will be BCC, Jobcentre Plus and WMCA alongside key stakeholders from across community, education, skills and employer bodies. The group will set an annual work programme based on insight and policy. Initial research (funded by the BCC Data Observatory) is a start point towards the aim of better integrating employment and training support and is being carried out by DEMOS who are mapping current employment and skills services available in the area, and concurrently WMCA has commissioned a study to review adult skills provision in Birmingham. This research will provide a strong foundation for more significant and collaborative improvements, which will also help meet the ambitions set out in the Breaking Down Barriers report (July 2021) and the

Something to Aim for: Scrutiny Inquiry on Employment and Skills for Young People report (April 2023).

**Initiation of Ward End Phase 2 activity**

- 5.4. Engagement is underway with local stakeholders including the MP, Ward Councillor, and community groups with respect to opportunities for local wealth building and economic development. Potential areas of activity include the consideration of a Neighbourhood Plan for Ward End, the development of a Traders' Association for the local centre, and the improvement of local assets such as Ward End Park House.

**Programme Expansion and Review**

- 5.5. The capacity of the newly appointed Programme Manager and Programme Development Manager will be utilised to undertake a Programme Review. Priorities will include the improvement of programme and reporting, communications and financial management.
- 5.6. An insight, monitoring and impact framework for the programme will be designed with the input of the City Observatory as a central part of the Council's overall approach to measuring Levelling Up.
- 5.7. The programme team will also be working up a strategy to maximise funding opportunities including proposals aligned with the Shared Prosperity Fund.

## Project Register

Project Reference and Title	Summary	Stage Outputs	Funding Source	Agreed Budget ('000s)	Update and Next Milestone
EB007: Bordesley Green Spatial Pilot	This is a place-based to study which seeks to establish a framework for assessing the quality of local places in terms of utility and amenity in line with the theory of the "15-minute city".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pilot study to inform future transport and development activities in East Birmingham.</li> <li>• Resident engagement platform developed with West Midlands Innovation Fund to improve co-design of local solutions with residents</li> </ul>	BCC	£50	Budget approval in place and assessment work commencing Q4 2022/23
EB009: Dolphin Centre Youth Hub	A package of improvements to the Dolphin Centre in Ward End Park to include the creation of an inclusive Youth Hub with full disabled access, integrating Jobcentre Plus services for engagement of young people into hospitality, healthcare and other key employment sectors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A fully fitted-out social enterprise café;</li> <li>• A lift and WC for disabled access;</li> <li>• Upgraded digital connectivity technology infrastructure to enable the effective functioning of the youth employment coach activity.</li> </ul>	BCC  ERDF  GBSLEP	£2,021	Work on site and on track for completion during Q4 2022/23 - Q1 2023/24.
EB010: Cole Valley Country Parks	Sub-programme to comprise activity associated with Cole Valley including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for River Cole Community Commons project (ERDF)</li> <li>• Improvements to walking, cycling and ecology along</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Glebe Farm design study</li> <li>• Tyseley ERDF project outputs</li> <li>• Country Park/LNR Designations</li> </ul>	BCC  UoB  Environment Agency  ERDF	£1,400	Cole Valley Community Commons approved and legal agreement now in place.  Glebe Farm design study in progress.



	River Cole Valley Further designation of Country Parks and/or Local Nature Reserves (LNR).				Next milestone will be commencement of work on Country Park/LNR Designation
EB014: Pocket Parks	Aligned with the East Birmingham Green Infrastructure Vision and project EB013, this project will deliver improvements to 1-3 local green spaces as pocket parks and/or local growing space via community-led activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improvements to a local green space as a new pocket park</li> <li>• 3 Pop-up parks to activate neglected spaces</li> </ul>	BCC	£30	Internal approvals in place and delivery is mobilising for Q1 2023/24
EB015: Youth Employability Pilot	'Partnerships for People and Place' funded - A locally designed and delivered scheme focussed on innovation in employer support in schools for successful careers for East Birmingham young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 60 young people with more secure pathways ahead of them beyond this transition</li> <li>• 40 young people successfully progressing into education/employment from this transition</li> <li>• Partnership learning and system change</li> </ul>	DLUHC	£335	<p>Working with six schools over 200 pupils. Innovative 'Reverse mentoring' event for 120 young people and a range of employers in January.</p> <p>Evaluation starts in April and project completes in August.</p>
EB017: Green Infrastruct	This work will progress the approach set out in the East Birmingham Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green Infrastructure Action Plan</li> <li>• Enhanced partnerships and organisational capacity</li> </ul>	BCC	£100	Landscape Architect now in place

ure Action Plan	Infrastructure Vision document.	Information in support of business cases and funding bids			to deliver Action Plan  Partnership working with National Trust will inform the project as it develops.
EB018: Asset Led Delivery Vehicle Phase 2	This project builds on the previous review and analysis of the Council's land and property assets undertaken via EB016 (Asset Led Delivery Vehicle Phase 1) and is intended to inform the development of a land and property sub-programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for EBNS proposal (TDD etc.)</li> <li>• Analysis and options appraisal to inform land and property sub-programme</li> </ul>	BCC	£175	Has provided input to EBNS Investment Zone Expression of Interest and ongoing work on Trailblazer Devolution Deal.
EB019: Meadway Phase 2	This phase of work will deliver a Strategic Outline Case for health provision at the Meadway site, and parallel work towards a City Council business case for the overall development of a new local centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic Outline Case for health provision</li> <li>• Options appraisal to inform BCC OBC/FBC</li> </ul>	BCC/ICB	£150	BCC and NHS progressing initial exploration of the site for options for the Strategic Outline Case