

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

ECONOMY, SKILLS AND TRANSPORT O&S COMMITTEE

1400 hours on 14th September 2017, Committee Room 2– Actions

Present:

Councillor Zafar Iqbal (Chair)

Councillors Zaker Choudhry, Liz Clements, Josh Jones, Ziaul Islam, Timothy Huxtable and John O'Shea

Also Present:

Councillor Brett O'Reilly, Cabinet Member for Jobs and Skills

Shilpi Akbar, Assistant Director, Employment

Michael Swift, Senior Economic Policy Officer

Baseema Begum, Research & Policy Officer, Scrutiny Office

Rose Kiely, Overview & Scrutiny Manager, Scrutiny Office

1. NOTICE OF RECORDING

The Chairman advised that this meeting would be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet site (which could be accessed at "www.birminghamnewsroom.com") and members of the press/public may record and take photographs.

The whole of the meeting would be filmed except where there were confidential or exempt items.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Sir Albert Bore, Phil Davis, Mahmood Hussain, David Barrie and Ken Wood.

3. ECONOMY, SKILLS AND TRANSPORT: ACTION NOTES 13TH JULY 2017/ISSUES ARISING

The Chair, Cllr Iqbal confirmed progress on outstanding actions from the Committee's previous meetings:

1. Members asked for an invitation to be extended to Transport for West Midlands to attend a future meeting to discuss plans for integrated ticketing on public transport.
2. The information on transportation costs for the Commonwealth Games was circulated to Committee on 24th August.
3. A list of Transport Delivery Committee dates were sent to Members on 24th August to note if they wish to attend.
4. Councillor Stacey will be providing feedback on his meeting with the Mayor as part of his annual update when he attends Committee in February 2018.
5. Information relating to the metro stop adjacent to Snow Hill station was provided to Members on 5th September.
6. The Committee will receive a report on Floor Risk Management in January 2018.

4. CABINET MEMBER FOR JOBS AND SKILLS

(See document No 1)

The Cabinet Member set out that the focus of report was on the wider work in his portfolio and the work with the Combined Authority. The report set out the aim of the Combined Authority's Productivity and Skills Commission to increase productivity in the West Midlands region.

During discussion Members made the following points were made:

- It is important to communicate the job, training and other opportunities coming online with HS2 coming to the city. It was felt that local people are still not fully aware of the opportunities it brings and are therefore not engaged. There is therefore a need to connect local people to these opportunities and get the message out there.
- How is the City Council feeding into the Mayor's work on the second Devolution deal in respect of the jobs, skills and apprenticeships agenda. The Cabinet Member confirmed that he is trying to get a meeting with the Mayor to discuss further.
- The Birmingham Employment & Skills board has been re-established with a mix of public and private sector members. Shilpi Akbar is the lead for the City Council. The City has been split into four quadrants to mirror the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) geographies allowing more engagement with communities.
- What lobbying was being done by the Combined Authority and Local Government for the European monies that will be lost that currently funds some of the employment projects that the City Council is involved in.
- The Cabinet Member confirmed that a report will be presented to the October meeting of Cabinet on the Youth Employment Initiative underspend of approximately £35m.
- Encouraging more young women to take up opportunities in the rail industry is a key challenge. Currently the industry is 95% male.

- The Cabinet Member confirmed that a report on the YEI project underspend of £35m will be presented to Cabinet in October. There are a number of factors why the total amount of £50.4m could not be drawn down.

RESOLVED:-

1. Interim findings of the Productivity & Skills Commission to be shared with Committee.
2. Cllr O'Reilly to provide Cllr Clements with a breakdown of who sits on the Productivity and Skills Commission by gender and ethnicity.
3. A breakdown to be provided on the percentage of young people that have finished the Youth Promise Plus (YPP) programme and their destinations with a gender breakdown and analysis of the outcomes. Including further information on the percentage of those that left the YPP programme and did not achieve a positive outcome.
4. Invite the CEO of Finance Birmingham to a future Committee meeting to discuss 'Access to Finance' options.
5. Members requested an update on European funding programmes and requested that Lloyd Broad, Head of European Affairs is invited to a future meeting.

5. THE SKILLS AGENDA

(See document No 2)

Shilpi Akbar, Assistant Director, Employment set out the context of her report to Committee on the role of the City Council's Employment Service in supporting inclusive economic growth with partners. It was noted that the majority of resources that fund work with young people on qualification and skills is channelled through partners such as Further Education colleges and training providers.

The West Midlands Combined Authority is leading on the skills agenda for the region.

During discussion the following comments were made:

- In terms of area action plans the Employment Access team work with businesses and developers to identify need and target recruitment accordingly to ensure that those not in work, education or training are able to access the opportunities available.
- The Birmingham Jobs Fund (BJF) has been hugely successful to achieving positive outcomes. Going forward it will be aligned with the YPP under the banner of 'Young Talent for Business' especially targeting those with special educational needs/learning difficulties. The aim is to work with employers to create a career plan opportunity at the point of entry into work for these particular young people.
- The role of local community organisations in the 'Community Support for Work' programme in terms of support and advice on benefits.
- Universal Credit self-service will be rolled out shortly. Job Centre Plus are leading on this work in terms of providing advice and support.

- Shilpi Akbar's team are involved in the work of the City Council's Welfare Reform Committee being led by Chris Gibbs. This Committee aims to support City Council tenants who currently receive Universal Credit.

RESOLVED:-

1. A breakdown to be provided on the percentage of young people that have finished the Youth Promise Plus (YPP) programme and their destinations with a gender breakdown and analysis of the outcomes. Including further information on the percentage of those that left the YPP programme and did not achieve a positive outcome.
2. Shilpi Akbar to provide an updated list on the work of the Employment Access team in working with employers on major regeneration schemes in the city and area action plans. In particular highlighting impact on jobs, employment, skills and training.
3. The Department for Work & Pensions Flexible Support Fund - Shilpi Akbar to provide a breakdown to Cllr Islam for each district on numbers of individuals supported into training and employment.

6. WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE ECONOMY, SKILLS AND TRANSPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2017-18

(See document No 4)

Members noted the changes to the work programme as stated by the Chair.

It was agreed that the Committee would consider an in-depth piece of work on Skills.

RESOLVED:-

1. The Commonwealth Games is added to the Committee's work programme to look at in-depth once the bid has been finalised and approved.
2. Transport for West Midlands are contacted to provide Members with an update at their next meeting on the rationalisation of bus stops due to take place over the autumn.

7. REQUEST(S) FOR CALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS

None.

8. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

None.

9. AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS

Agreed.

RESOLVED:-

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

The meeting ended at 1605 hours.