



East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy Update

15th September 2021

1. Introduction

1.1 This report is to:

- i. update the Economy & Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee on progress with respect to the East Birmingham and North Solihull Inclusive Growth agenda following the most recent previous report in March 2021.
- ii. provide a further update on progress towards transitioning the East Birmingham work from the strategy-making into the delivery phase.

2. Progress since last update

1.2 At the time of the previous report to this committee, the East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy (the Strategy) had recently been adopted by the City Council's Cabinet (during February 2021). The report set out a summary of the consultation activity which had informed the Strategy and summarised the anticipated next steps for moving forward with the East Birmingham Inclusive Growth agenda.

1.3 The following key activities have been progressed since the previous report:

1.3.1 Generating bids and supporting partnership bids for external funding, including bids into the new Levelling Up Fund and Community Renewal Fund, which have so far secured more than £1m for projects in the area.

1.3.2 Community engagement and capacity building including support for community funding applications with a value in excess of £0.5m

1.3.3 The mobilisation of an initial tranche of projects. These include:

- USE-IT Transfer Network
- Ward End/Cole Valley Skills Hub
- Meadway Local Centre
- Tyseley Clean Energy Masterplan for Growth
- Community Engagement Pilot
- East Birmingham/North Solihull corridor transport study
- Bordesley Green Spatial Pilot
- Community Economic Development Planning Policy Lab

Further information regarding each of these projects is provided in part G of the Enhanced Business Case attached as Appendix 1.

1.3.4 There was a meeting of the East Birmingham Board on 14th May 2021. The main item was a proposal for the key public sector partners to collaborate on the strategic "levelling up" of East Birmingham and north Solihull.

1.3.5 There was a meeting of the East Birmingham Ward Members' Forum on 18th May 2021. The agenda included a discussion of the emerging programme

business case, the papers from the East Birmingham Board, and a presentation on Ward Planning and the Celebrating Communities Grants programme.

1.3.6 The East Birmingham Rapid Policy Unit (RPU) has been established and has met fortnightly. The RPU is an informal team including City Council Officers and external partners who collaborate to support the Programme. The Rapid Policy Unit facilitates cross-directorate and multi-agency partnership working and is intended to expand to include additional partners as the Programme proceeds.

1.3.7 An Enhanced Business Case for the East Birmingham Programme (attached to this report as Appendix 1) was agreed by Cabinet in July 2021. The purpose of the East Birmingham Programme is to deliver the vision of the Strategy. The Programme Objectives for the period 2021-41 are as follows:

- Improve performance across a range of key socio-economic indicators including the seven objectives set out in the East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy to at least the national average.
- 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.

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

- Taking a comprehensive multi-agency approach that links the macro (major projects and large institutions) and the micro (local people and organisations).
- Maximising the value of development, infrastructure, and real estate as catalysts for inclusive growth through the delivery of social value, community wealth building and the just transition to zero carbon.
- Maximising opportunities to improve service effectiveness and efficiency across the Council's remit and in close collaboration with public sector partners.
- Establishing and maintaining strong and productive relationships with local communities and organisations. Supporting the Localism agenda and empowering the community to play a key role in the programme.
- Supporting the development of community assets, community enterprises, community leadership and economic resilience.
- Investing in the future through prevention and early intervention.

- 1.5 The 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.
- 1.6 The agreed option for the Programme is based on concepts developed by the East Birmingham Board and in discussion with senior management and Cabinet. It involves the establishment of a core Programme team within the Inclusive Growth Directorate. The Programme team will significantly increase the capacity of the Rapid Policy Unit (RPU).
- 1.7 The expanded RPU will work at scale with public, private and third sector partners to bring forward a comprehensive set of projects. This will include preparing business cases, bidding into external funding and the co-ordination of project delivery. The projects generated in this way will incrementally contribute towards the achievement of the investment objectives.
- 1.8 The RPU will also work to position East Birmingham at the forefront of the City's inclusive growth agenda, providing a centre of excellence for policy, research, innovation, and collaborative working which empowers local communities to shape the delivery of the Programme.
- 1.9 The total approved budget for the Programme is £3.627m funded from the Delivery Plan Capacity Build Transformation Budget. The Programme qualifies for this transformational funding because its outcomes include financial savings and reductions in the need for front line services, that will result from reshaped and/or newly established prevention and early intervention opportunities.
- 1.10 Annual Reports on the progress of the Programme will be provided to Cabinet and to Overview and Scrutiny Committees as required. Oversight and monitoring of the programme will also be provided by the East Birmingham Board and the Inclusive Growth Portfolio Board.

2 Next Steps

- 2.1 The principal focus of activity for the next six months will be as follows:
 - Recruitment of the programme team. This is subject to consultation with the Trades Union and internal HR processes.
 - Project development: assembling project business cases and funding bids for interventions of various scales and across the scope of the Strategy.
 - Project delivery of the projects in progress
 - Programme development including research, analysis and monitoring.
 - Ongoing community engagement and development
- 2.2 Milestones:
 - Commencement of recruitment activities September 2021
 - East Birmingham Board Meeting late October 2021 (tbc)
 - Ward Members' Forum meeting 7th October 2021
 - First annual report to Cabinet July 2022