

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

CO-ORDINATING O&S COMMITTEE – PUBLIC MEETING

1000 hours on Friday 9th November 2018, Committee Rooms 3 & 4

Action Notes

Present:

Councillor John Cotton (Chair)

Councillors Mohammed Aikhlaq, Tahir Ali, Deirdre Alden, Debbie Clancy, Liz Clements, Roger Harmer and Rob Pocock

Also Present:

Jonathan Tew, Assistant Chief Executive

Chris Jordan, Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods and Communities

Emma Williamson, Head of Scrutiny Services

1. NOTICE OF RECORDING/WEBCAST

The Chairman advised that this meeting would be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet site (www.civico.net/birmingham) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there were confidential or exempt items.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllrs Holbrook and Hodivala.

Cllr Cotton noted that Cllr Hodivala had only been appointed to the committee on Tuesday.

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None.

4. ACTION NOTES/ISSUES ARISING

(See document No 1)

The action notes from the meeting held on 7th September 2018 were agreed.

The Committee then agreed to vary the agenda.

5. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE PLAN

(See document No 3)

Jonathan Tew, Assistant Chief Executive, gave an overview of the plan as it stands and the monthly meetings with the Birmingham Independent Improvement Panel (BIIP) and government. The focus of those discussions has been:

- In-year budgets and preparations for next year's budget;
- A new approach to ensure evidence for each of the items in the plan is shared with the Panel before they are marked as completed – that has now started, so in the next update a number of these items will be marked as completed;
- The Children's Strategic Partnership work is moving forward with a lot of positive support from partners and it was suggested that this is considered by the Children's Social Care O&S Committee.

Following questions from members, Jonathan Tew and Chris Jordan commented:

- The evidence requirement in the plan is for the BIIP to reassure themselves on progress; some of that will be in the monthly meetings, and some in-between those meetings with the sharing of documents.
- The next formal stocktake report will be in the spring.
- Acronyms will be explained in future documents.
- An update on localism will be coming to this committee in December, bringing forward the White Paper to flesh out the governance issues in relation to localism (paragraph 1.9).
- With regards to the redefinition of the councillors role (paragraph 1.9), this is being developed in dialogue with members; working with Inlogov using their 21st Century councillor model.
- In response to concerns about the JNC re-structure and whether it will ensure current gaps are closed (e.g. no current lead for sustainability), members were advised that the Leader and CEX would be able to give more detail.
- On diversity issues, with regards to the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), work is on-going to follow up on the Leadership Commission; and a report on this is due to come back to full Council. An update note on the work of the WMCA will be provided to the committee.
- It was noted that the participation in the localism consultation was low, and that it seemed to be focused on parish councils; this will be discussed in more detail at the next meeting
- With regards to the case management system, members have had major issues with it but this is not reflected in the plan feedback. The Deputy Leader is compiling feedback; this is something the Committee will return to in January.
- The City-wide Partnership Framework is a different approach to partnership working; there is now a settled attendance list, with two scoping sessions, facilitated by Jacqui Smith, looking at a range of issues (homelessness, crime

etc – i.e. key outcomes for Birmingham citizens), with a strong push to have a parallel youth partnership approach. There was a clear view that this needs a focus to yield a tangible difference.

- Budget consultation is considered at Cabinet next week, there are a range of options on how this consultation is done. Each scrutiny committee will be picking up aspects of the consultation as it relates to their remit.

RESOLVED:-

- That the Leader and Chief Executive are asked to provide an update on the JNC re-structure;
- That a report on Localism, including details of the White Paper, will be brought to this committee in December;
- That an update note on the work of the West Midlands Combined Authority, with particular reference to diversity and the leadership Commission, is provided;
- That attendance for the City-wide Partnership is circulated;
- That citizens panel data and the outputs from the residents' survey process to be shared with scrutiny committees.

6. TRACKING REPORT: PARISH COUNCILS INQUIRY

(See document No 2)

Jonathan Tew, Assistant Chief Executive, and Chris Jordan, Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods and Communities introduced the report.

Members noted that none of the deadlines had been met. There were differences of opinion on the framework, with some members believing it was a top-down approach, and others saying that this was a useful framework as there is appetite in some areas of the city for parish councils or other local governance structures, and progress had been made.

It was noted that the approach being taken now was a two-stage approach, with the green paper launch to be followed by a white paper. The completion dates did not reflect this. The recommendations had to some extent been superseded by policy developments and only part of the picture was presented today. It was therefore:

RESOLVED:-

- That each of the recommendations be recorded as a “3- Not Achieved” and the report be noted;
- That the update on localism be brought to the committee in December, and the Cabinet Member invited to attend.

7. INQUIRY: CITY COUNCIL MEETING

(See document No 4)

The proposed inquiry into the City Council meeting was introduced by Emma Williamson, Head of Scrutiny Services. She outlined the papers attached to the agenda and asked for members' views on how to take the inquiry forward.

Members made the following points:

- The city council meetings agendas from other authorities show the range of approaches taken across core cities;
- There is a need to improve quality of debate;
- Comments from new members in particular would be welcome – Cllr Cotton confirmed that a meeting with some new members to obtain their views had already taken place;
- Surveys of members don't work, face to face sessions were needed;
- The code of conduct in council meetings should be considered;
- Where Cabinet Members undertake to get back to a member in response to a question, is that followed up?
- The tracker for City Council motions should perhaps go to City council meetings
- Whilst three motions are put to City Council, there is rarely time for more than two.

RESOLVED:-

- That the terms of reference be noted;
- That a timeline for evidence gathering be circulated to members of the committee.

8. WORK PROGRAMME – SEPTEMBER 2018

(See document No 5)

RESOLVED:-

- That the work programme be noted.

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

None.

10. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

A member expressed his disappointment that no Cabinet Member had attended to present the localism report.

11. AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS

RESOLVED:-

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

The meeting ended at 1120 hours.