



## Economy & Skills O&S Committee: Employment and Skills Terms of Reference

<b>Chair:</b>	Cllr Saima Suleman
<b>Deputy Chair:</b>	Cllr Katherine Iroh
<b>Committee Members:</b>	Cllrs Raqeeb Aziz, Nicky Brennan, Izzy Knowles, Simon Morrall, Richard Parkin and Jamie Tennant
<b>Officer Support:</b>	Fiona Bottrill, Overview & Scrutiny Manager (07395 884487) Scrutiny Officer: Baseema Begum (303 1668) Committee Manager: Louisa Nisbett (303 9844)

### 1 Recommendation

- 1.1 The Committee:
- 1.2 Agree the Terms of Reference for the Employment and Skills Inquiry attached as Appendix 1.
- 1.3 Appoint the Deputy Chair of the Inquiry Task and Finish Group.

### 2 Background

- 2.1 The Inquiry proposed by the Economy and Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee was agreed by Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the meeting on the 8 July 2022 as one of the 4 Inquiries to be carried out during 2022/23. Following discussions with the Chair and key officers the draft terms of reference attached were considered by the Task and Finish Group on the 30 September 2022.

### 3 Terms of Reference

- 3.1 The Terms of Reference for the Employment and Skills Inquiry are attached as Appendix 1.
- 3.2 The aim is to complete the inquiry within the municipal year and report to City Council on the 4 April 2023. In line with the Scrutiny Framework Procedure Notes the final report will be considered by the Task and Finish Group including representatives of the 3 main political parties and the report will be signed off by the Chair of the Task and Finish Group.



## 4 Legal Implications

- 4.1 There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report. However, the final inquiry report will include legal implications relating to any recommendations that are put forward for consideration by City Council

## 5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no immediate financial implications arising from this report. However, the final inquiry report will include financial implications relating to any recommendations that are put forward for consideration by City Council.

## 6 Public Sector Equality Duty

- 6.1 The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

- 6.2 The Task and Finish Group should ensure that it addresses these duties by considering them during work programme development, the scoping of work, evidence gathering and making recommendations. This should include considering: How policy issues impact on different groups within the community, particularly those that share a relevant protected characteristic; Whether the impact on particular groups is fair and proportionate; Whether there is equality of access to services and fair representation of all groups within Birmingham; Whether any positive opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and/or good relations between people are being realised.

- 6.3 The Task and Finish Group should ensure that equalities comments, and any recommendations, are based on evidence. This should include demographic and service level data and evidence of residents/service-users views gathered through consultation.

## 7 Use of Appendices

- 7.1 Appendix 1: Draft Terms of Reference for Employment and Skills Scrutiny Inquiry.



## Contact Officers

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## Work Outline

# Birmingham Skills Offer: meeting the needs of current and future employment opportunities

## Economy and Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Group

Our key question:	How is the council responding to the Breaking Down the Barriers Report and what is the vision for Life-Long Learning and Skills across the city?
1. How is O&S adding value through this work?	<p>Birmingham has a persistently high unemployment rate and low skills which affects the opportunities for residents and the ability to grow the local economy and attract business to the City.</p> <p>In February 2020, prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, 6.3% of young people aged 18-24 in Birmingham and 6.1% in the West Midlands were unemployed. By March 2021, this had risen to 11.6% in Birmingham and 11.5% in the West Midlands – an increase of over 5%. When we remove economically inactive young people who are not currently seeking employment, such as students, youth unemployment in the city rose to approximately 20% as of April 2021. Almost one in five young people in Birmingham are now out of work - substantially greater than the current UK average of 13.5% for 18 to 24 youth unemployment. (Breaking Down the Barriers)</p> <p>The Scrutiny Inquiry will contribute to policy development through focussing on the recommendations of the Breaking Down the Barriers Report that relate to the skills agenda for young people.</p> <p>Grand Challenges addressed: Unemployment, skills and the economy</p> <p>Corporate Plan Priorities: A city that is Prosperous and Inclusive</p>
2. What needs to be done?	<p>Key questions:</p> <p>The 5 recommendations from the Breaking Down the Barrier Report that are relevant to are relevant to this Scrutiny Inquiry are:</p>



- Support young people to build confidence and resilience
- Develop a comprehensive city-wide mentoring scheme
- Facilitate accessible work experience opportunities
- Reshape careers advice and guidance services
- Deliver a locally designed scheme of employment support for young people and businesses

The Inquiry may also identify specific sectors where there is a skills gap or groups of young people to consider in greater detail during the inquiry.

Members will also receive evidence on the data on employment and skills and the current arrangement for skills funding for children and young people and the position going forward.

Evidence from:

- Cabinet Members
- Birmingham City Council Skills Team: including data on jobs and skills funding (Committee Meeting November 2022)
- Employers\* – identify 2 sectors (based on evidence)
- Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)\*
- Local Enterprise Partnership \*
- Business Improvement Districts\*
- Trade unions / Trades Council\*
- Young People (including SEND and Care Leavers. City Youth Board\*, Link with Beat Freaks)
- Schools
- Chamber of Commerce\*
- Careers Enterprise Company\*
- Small Business Association\*
- Higher and further education institutions\* ( 9 Further Education colleges and 5 universities)
- Examples of good practice from other areas\*

\*These organisations do not have a statutory duty to contribute to the Scrutiny Inquiry but will be invited to contribute and give evidence.

The WMCA has the devolved power for adult skills but has a separate WMCA Scrutiny Committee that will consider this adult skills. The WMCA work recognises the importance of youth skills and employment and works with regional partners to support this. However, while not scrutinising the WMCA, it will be important to understand the regional strategic context for the skills agenda in Birmingham.

The Breaking Down the Barriers report includes recommendations regarding reducing the cost of public transport, children and young people's mental health, digital inclusion, giving a voice to young people through the Brum Talks Festival and creating a one stop shop online hub. These issues are



	outside the scope of the Scrutiny Inquiry. It is noted that there is a separate Scrutiny Inquiry taking place on children and young people's mental health.
3. What timescale do we propose to do this in?	<p>Inquiry report to City Council 4 April 2023.</p> <p>It is noted that a response to the recommendations in the Breaking Down the Barriers Report will be provided in December 2022. This will take into account the work being undertaken by the Inquiry and the Inquiry timescales.</p>
4. What outcomes are we looking to achieve?	<p>Reducing unemployment</p> <p>Increasing skills / retraining for better paid jobs</p> <p>Reducing long term unemployment / reducing poverty</p> <p>To consider the funding streams to deliver the skills agenda for young people</p> <p>Including the transition from European Social Fund (ESF) to the UK Prosperity Fund</p> <p>Careers – understanding what careers / job opportunities there will be in the city and how to train for them.</p>
5. What is the best way to achieve these outcomes and what routes will we use?	The Economy and Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee has established a Task and Finish Group to undertake this Inquiry. Evidence will be presented to Committee meeting or meetings of the Task and Finish Group.

### Member / Officer Leads

Lead Member:	Chair of Task and Finish Group: Cllr. Suleman Deputy Chair to be agreed at Committee Meeting 12 October 2022
Members of the Task and Finish Group	Cllrs: Suleman, Aziz, Morrall, Brennan, Knowles
Lead Officer:	Fiona Bottrill. Senior Overview and Scrutiny Manager.