

## **BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL**

# **ECONOMY AND SKILLS O&S COMMITTEE**

**1000 hours on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2023, Committee Room 2, Council House**

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### **Present:**

Councillor Akhlaq Ahmed

Councillors Katherine Iroh, Jon Hunt, Richard Parkin and Lisa Trickett

### **Also Present:**

Philip Nell, Director of Property & Investment

James Betjemaan, Head of Curzon and Enterprise Zone Development

Shariat Rokneddin, Policy and Governance Manager (online)

Amanda Lloyd, Principal Employment Officer (online)

Fiona Bottrill, Senior Overview and Scrutiny Manager

Baseema Begum, Scrutiny Officer

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The meeting began at 10.04 hours

### **1. NOTICE OF RECORDING/WEBCAST**

The Chair advised those present that the meeting would be webcast for live and subsequent broadcast and that Members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there are confidential or exempt items.

### **2. APOLOGIES**

None.

### **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Two non-pecuniary interests were shared. Cllr Hunt declared that he is the Chair of the 3BS Neighbourhood Forum. Cllr Trickett stated that she was involved in some work in the East Birmingham area.

#### **4. MEMBERSHIP OF ECONOMY AND SKILLS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Chair welcomed Cllr Trickett who replaced Cllr Aziz on the Committee.

#### **5. MINUTES**

(See Item No.5)

The action notes of the last meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2023 were approved.

#### **6. ACTION TRACKER**

(See Item No.6)

The action tracker was noted.

#### **7. REGENERATION ACROSS THE CITY**

(See Item No. 7)

The Chair introduced the item and highlighted the importance of regeneration to residents and businesses. Cllr Ahmed also stated that the Committee would have the opportunity to input into the Our Future City: Draft Central Birmingham Framework 2040'(DCBF) consultation that is currently open for public comment and understand the timeline for a refresh of the Birmingham Development Plan (BDP).

Philip Nell, Director of Property & Investment and James Betjemaan, Head of Curzon and Enterprise Zone Development were present for this item. The key points from the paper circulated with the agenda pack were highlighted and during the discussion with Members the following were amongst the points made: -

- The Committee supported the vision for the City to becoming a greener city of more jobs, better transport options and higher quality, energy efficient new homes and the focus that extended beyond the city centre. However, Members commented that the term 'central' (as part of the 'The Our Future City: Draft Central Birmingham Framework 2040') may still be interpreted as city centre focussed and suggested that an alternative name for the strategy may better reflect the localities it covers.
- Officers acknowledged that the DCBF was not about the whole of the city and the majority of the growth zones were outside of the city centre. However, there are a number of other policies and plans for other regeneration initiatives such as the East Birmingham Inclusive Strategy and the Perry Barr Action Plan.
- As with other comparable documents to the DCBF a similar approach has been taken in ensuring that the Council's governance process is followed correctly ensuring that the Cabinet Member has signed off the report before it being presented to Cabinet for final approval. As part of this process the Economy and Skills O&S Committee were consulted in April before it received final approval at Cabinet.

- The Committee also wanted to understand the links with neighbourhood governance arrangements including Neighbourhood and Ward Plans and how communities will be genuinely engaged and involved with the proposals. Community engagement must be integral at each stage of the proposals and development which will require time and adequate officer support. It was the view of the Committee that the DCBF should set out clearly how communities will be involved in the further development and delivery of the plan.
- It was noted that the framework sets out the connection with the Birmingham Transport Plan and the benefits of increasing sustainable and active travel. Members want to ensure that the opportunities that will be created will be accessible to communities that have higher levels of deprivation and that the implementation of the DCBF, and the Birmingham Transport Plan are aligned.
- Members highlighted the Council's policy on undeveloped held and unheld land and stated that they want the Council to be proactive in seeking opportunities to develop these to the benefit of local communities and using assets in localities including SMEs and businesses.
- Members questioned the reliance on the property development model of development.
- The Committee supported the proposals for high density housing that will provide better quality, community orientated houses with access to local green spaces.
- It was highlighted by Members that in light of the revenue implications for the Council, the DCBF will need to be reviewed in line with the Council's financial plan. Members supported the use of Section 106 agreements to cover the revenue costs of green spaces. It was noted that artists impressions included in the document were not an accurate representation and as the development progresses the revenue cost for the Council of maintaining trees may limit the planting schemes.

**RESOLVED: -**

1. The report was noted.
2. The Committee's feedback on the DCBF to be submitted as part of the consultation process and copied to officers by the consultation closing date of 17<sup>th</sup> August.
3. The Chair announced that the item would be added to the agenda for the next meeting as Members requested further information on the economic, environmental and sustainability impact of the proposals within the DCBF.

**8. INCREASING THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE THROUGH THE COUNCIL'S SOCIAL VALUE PROCUREMENT**

(See Item No. 8)

The Chair introduced the item and explained that there were technical issues with the web connection therefore only audio would be available for this item as officers were presenting remotely.

Shariat Rokneddin, Policy and Governance Manager presented this item online and referenced the key points from his report. During discussion with Members the following were amongst the points made: -

- The Corporate Procurement Service (CPS) at the Council develops the policies relating to social value. These policies are available on the Council's website.
- The social value measures are categorised into 6 themes as follows: -
  - Local employment
  - Buy Local
  - Partners and Communities
  - Good employer
  - Green and sustainable
  - Ethical Procurement
- The Council presents those bidding for contracts with themes outlining relevant priorities and policies that must be responded to and referenced as part of their submission. Responses can be quantitative (i.e., number of units to be delivered throughout the contract) or qualitative (i.e., method statement of how they will achieve these commitments). Responses are assessed with a weighting of 20% given for social value as part of the overall assessment. The successful bidder is expected to deliver against the action plan as agreed and this is monitored by the contract manager. Contractors are supported to deliver their employment and skills targets by the Council's Employment Access Team.
- Members heard that although each contract manager maintains the delivery of the action plan, there is no systematic method for collating the overall social value of Council contracts. CPS has in the past collated this data by surveying the top 40 largest contractors who have responded to a set of key measures, and these have been reported to Cabinet. Currently not all returns are being captured from these contracts as there is not a system in place to do so however different methodologies are being looked at including Oracle and through other IT solutions.
- Due to poor audio the Chair agreed that the item would be added to the agenda for the next meeting and the following queries raised by Members would be forwarded to the officers in preparation for further discussion: -
  - What assurance can be provided that the Council contracts are delivering their social value commitments?
  - How is CPS working with contract managers to ensure delivery of social value outcomes?
  - How does this ensure that the contractors deliver added value e.g., the apprenticeships that are created are not just the ones that they would have anyway through the apprenticeship levy?
  - Up to date information / snapshot on the delivery of the top 40 contractors social value commitment including an analysis.
  - What are the options to develop a system to monitor social value procurement across the Council and the timescales to deliver this?
  - What can Birmingham learn from other areas of good practice regarding social value procurement and how this is delivered and monitored?

**RESOLVED: -**

1. Item to be rescheduled with officers attending in-person to respond the queries raised by Members.

**9. WORK PROGRAMME**

(See Item No. 9)

Fiona Bottrill outlined changes and updates made to the work programme since the last meeting.

**RESOLVED: -**

1. Further scrutiny of the economic assessment and the sustainability objectives and outcomes of the DCBF document to be scheduled for the September meeting so that the Committee can provide feedback/recommendations to inform the future Cabinet decision.
2. Items for October's meeting agreed including an update on the Local Skills Improvement Plan.
3. Scrutiny Office to contact the Chamber of Commerce to explore how contact with a range of SMEs can be facilitated for Members (by way of attending existing events/meetings) to see how the Council can support local businesses.

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

None.

**11. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

**12. AUTHORITY TO CHAIR AND OFFICERS**

Agreed.

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The meeting ended at 11:38 hours