

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

ECONOMY AND SKILLS O&S COMMITTEE

**1000 hours on 26th April 2023, Committee Rooms 3&4, Council House -
Actions**

Present:

Councillor Saima Suleman

Councillors Raqeeb Aziz, Katherine Iroh and Izzy Knowles.

Also Present:

Mark Gamble, Head of East Birmingham Development

James Betjemaan, Head of Curzon and Enterprise Zone Development

Timothy Brown, Principal Development Planning Officer (Online)

Fiona Bottrill, Senior Overview and Scrutiny Manager

Baseema Begum, Scrutiny Officer

1. NOTICE OF RECORDING/WEBCAST

The meeting began at 10.01.

The Chairman advised the meeting to note that members of the press/public may record and take photographs.

2. APOLOGIES

Councillors Richard Parkin and Jamie Tennant.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

4. ACTION NOTES

(See Item No. 4)

The action notes of the last meeting held on 11th January 2023 were agreed and the action tracker was noted.

5. EAST BIRMINGHAM INCLUSIVE GROWTH STRATEGY (EBIGS) UPDATE

(See Item No. 5)

Mark Gamble, Head of East Birmingham Development shared a presentation outlining the challenges and opportunities for the East Birmingham & North Solihull area as set out in the Strategy. Delivery of the programme with various workstreams is now in situ with key priorities and milestones set. This includes community wealth building and neighbourhood working. The Programme Team is almost fully staffed with further apprenticeship and graduate opportunities to be created shortly.

During discussion with Members the following were amongst the points made: -

- Maximising and improving recycling levels is a corporate challenge for the Council. Work is also ongoing through the Council's Route to Zero policy to address the challenge of reaching net zero carbon and it is acknowledged that an extension of the contract for the use of the Tyseley Energy from Waste facility has been approved by Cabinet. The East Birmingham Programme Team together with partners will be working with the Tyseley Enterprise as there are lots of opportunities to explore and take advantage of. Work in different areas is being led by different partners.
- There is a community wealth building programme in Ward End with different threads of activity happening. A social enterprise café has been set up and the Dolphin Centre is another community resource available. Community research is also happening to understand local needs such as the interest being shown in bringing back into use Ward End Park House as it is currently vacant. Options are being considered that will allow for capacity to be built in the community to support local enterprise going forward and to ensure that innovation is supported with specific projects being set up with milestones and realistic timescales.
- There is much work in progress in neighbouring Bordesley Green through the Bordesley Action Plan, neighbourhood planning and the Bordesley Green Spatial Plan.
- Seven elected Members sit on the East Birmingham Board. They are representatives of the population of approximately 750,000 people that live in the 26 wards that the Strategy covers. There is also Trade Union representation. For practical purposes a Ward Members Forum has been re-established, so all Members will be kept informed across the area. The Council's Neighbourhood Support and Development Unit (NSDU) will be working on the implementation of the EBIGS programme in community development.
- Younger people are being worked with through a reverse mentoring scheme and discussion has taken place on how to work with schools more closely.
- There is not an equalities representative on the East Birmingham Board however the equalities impact is being picked up through key objective setting.
- In terms of the impact of projects on the various communities across the East Birmingham area several methods of assessment will be carried out to

achieve and assess this with an impact framework in place. Engagement work will take place first to ensure that it fits residents needs so that the assessment will add value.

- Investment in phase 2 of the Strategy will be through the funding provided through the Government's Devolution Deal as East Birmingham and North Solihull are explicitly referenced. Investors are also more closely engaged on key issues such as green infrastructure.
- Any business rates that the Council collects will be retained and will act as an income stream over the coming years. This will allow the Council to borrow against future rates and the funds can be invested. This will be especially helpful to the East Birmingham area where 80-90% of businesses are SMEs. Equally with the Council's agenda on climate change and target to reach net zero carbon by 2030 there are some massive opportunities for local businesses to benefit from by working together which will result in strengthening the local economy.
- The Committee's report into employment and skills was noted by Mark Gamble and Members were advised that a new Employment and Skills Board was being created and that the report and its recommendations will be used to inform that process.
- In respect of progress made on the proposed tram route it was confirmed that it is a key part of the Strategy and regeneration of the city. Currently funding for it has not been secured but progress has been made on moving this forward by Transport for West Midlands and Birmingham and Solihull Councils.

RESOLVED: -

1. The report was noted.
2. A future update to be added to the work programme next year.

6. OUR FUTURE CITY PLAN

(See Item No.6)

James Betjemaan, Head of Enterprise Zone and Curzon Delivery spoke to his presentation that was circulated with the agenda and during the discussion with Members the following were amongst the points made: -

- The Plan contains information of in-depth studies carried out in the 5 key areas so that residents and other interested parties can understand the vision for the whole area both the proposals and the opportunities.
- Consideration will be given on the best way to consult with different groups and those with specific needs including those with disabilities, harder to reach communities and those with travelling restrictions to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to access the document and proposed plans. Officers will also be liaising with faith and community groups.
- A community mapping exercise is being carried out with neighbourhood liaison officers looking at what can be done in local areas as well as programmes for schools, colleges and universities where there is available

resource. A summary leaflet will be produced for each of the areas detailing relevant information that will be used as the basis for wider engagement.

- Residents will have the opportunity to engage in-person such as at community and youth events and Council related events as well as online. Officers will also be attending Ward Forum meetings and wherever possible attend existing events being held in the areas affected.
- Following the consultation exercise a board will make the final recommendations and decisions in a similar set up to the East Birmingham Board. The consultation will shape the approach taken in terms of priorities and recommendations will be made to the Council. It will be for the Council's Executive to decide the governance and resource for the project.

RESOLVED: -

1. The report was noted.
2. A future update to be added to the work programme.
3. A copy of the 'Something to Aim For' - Scrutiny Inquiry Employment and Skills for Young People (April 2023) agreed at City Council to be shared with James Betjemaan.

7. WORK PROGRAMME

(See Item No.7)

Fiona Bottrill, Senior Overview & Scrutiny Manager highlighted some issues that the Committee may wish to consider as part of their work programme in the new municipal year. Items that were noted as part of the Inquiry and that interested and required further investigation by Members included: -

- Inviting the Youth City Board to meet with the Economy & Skills O&S Committee/other O&S Committees so that young people can share their views on the work being undertaken.
- Engaging with employers in specific sectors as was noted in the Inquiry's Terms of Reference.
- Monitor social value procurement and to understand the number of apprenticeships and other opportunities such as work experience and voluntary work created through the social value elements of Council contracts for young people.

RESOLVED: -

1. The report was noted.

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

None.

9. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

None.

10. AUTHORITY TO CHAIR AND OFFICERS

Agreed.

The meeting ended at 11:21 hours