

Birmingham City Council

Report to Cabinet

9th February 2021



Subject: Adoption of East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy

Report of: Acting Director - Inclusive Growth

Relevant Cabinet Member: Councillor Ian Ward, Leader of the Council

Relevant O & S Chair(s): Councillor Lou Robson, Economy and Skills
Councillor Liz Clements, Transport and Environment

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Are specific wards affected?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No – All wards affected
If yes, name(s) of ward(s): Alum Rock, Bordesley Green, Bordesley & Highgate, Bromford & Hodge Hill, Castle Vale, Garretts Green, Gravelly Hill, Glebe Farm & Tile Cross, Heartlands, Nechells, Pype Hayes, Shard End, Sheldon, Small Heath, South Yardley, Sparkbrook & Balsall Heath East, Tyseley & Hay Mills, Ward End, Yardley East, Yardley West & Stechford.		
Is this a key decision?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, add Forward Plan Reference: 008290/2021		
Is the decision eligible for call-in?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the outcomes of the public consultation undertaken on the draft East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy during February 2020 - October 2020 and seeks authority for the adoption of the final document, attached as Appendix 1.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Adopts the final version of the East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy, attached as Appendix 1.

3 Background

- 3.1 The East Birmingham and North Solihull (EBNS) area has historically faced a number of economic, social and environmental challenges including persistently high levels of unemployment; low levels of academic attainment and skills; poor transport connectivity; a shortage of employment land and a weak development market. A number of these challenges were highlighted in the independent review of Birmingham by Sir Bob Kerslake, now Lord Kerslake. Area based initiatives and programmes across the area have delivered positive outcomes, however persistent inequalities remain suggesting that these entrenched challenges will require a new approach.
- 3.2 The coming of HS2 and the proposed East Birmingham to Solihull extension of the Midland Metro, are major opportunities for the area which can be harnessed to deliver wider positive change. The Metro will provide new connections to the two nationally significant economic hubs around the HS2 stations at Birmingham Curzon and UK Central in Solihull, and greatly improved connectivity along the route itself.
- 3.3 East Birmingham and North Solihull has been designated as an Inclusive Growth Corridor where Birmingham City Council, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council and the West Midlands Combined Authority are working with partners to maximise the benefits of the opportunities created by HS2 and the Metro extension, address the area's significant and sustained disadvantages, deliver growth, and to develop ways of working that will ensure that this growth is inclusive.
- 3.4 The East Birmingham Board (the Partnership Board) was established in late 2018, bringing together senior officers from multiple service areas within the City Council alongside external partners including Solihull Council, the NHS, emergency services, Department of Work and Pensions, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and the West Midlands Combined Authority.
- 3.5 The Partnership Board guided the production of an Inclusive Growth Strategy for East Birmingham (the Strategy) which sets out; a shared vision for the regeneration of East Birmingham over the next 20 years; the *Big Moves* which will secure this vision; the principles which will guide the delivery of the Big Moves and supporting activities, and a summary of the next steps that will be taken in the delivery of the vision.
- 3.6 Following Cabinet approval on 11th February 2020, public consultation on the Strategy commenced on 17th February for a planned period of 12 weeks, ending on 11th May. This formal consultation was intended to be the beginning of a continuous process of collaborative engagement through which local communities will shape

and influence the projects emerging from the Strategy, in line with the City Council's principles of localism and community cohesion. The original engagement strategy was developed in light of the particular demographic character of East Birmingham and was designed to reach the widest possible range of stakeholders and community groups in order to effectively engage with residents, particularly in "hard to reach" groups. There was a strong emphasis on face-to-face meetings in the community.

- 3.7 Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, from the week commencing 16th March consultation activities were modified to exclude face-to-face meetings and public events. Unfortunately, all eleven public events were due to take place after this date and had to be cancelled. All consultees who had been contacted previously were re-contacted and informed of the cancellation of the planned public events. A leaflet explaining the cancellation was sent to all planned venues and provided to partners to circulate. The Council website and the Council's consultation portal *Be Heard* were also updated accordingly
- 3.8 In light of these changes, the consultation deadline was extended indefinitely, with the intention of holding public events later in the year if possible, and consultation activities continued using email, telephone and video conferencing. Ultimately it was not possible for the planned public events to proceed, however some outdoor meetings on site did go ahead where circumstances and national lockdown restrictions allowed. The formal consultation was closed on the 18th October 2020.
- 3.9 Despite the constraints imposed by the pandemic, officers have been able to engage with a large number of local stakeholders and information about the Strategy has been circulated and shared widely by email and online. The extended duration of the consultation has also allowed the team to enter into detailed discussions with a diverse range of organisations and local community groups, and in many cases, this has developed into an ongoing relationship with initial discussions about the Strategy leading to wider conversations around issues, opportunities and projects.
- 3.10 A full report on the consultation is appended as Appendix 3. In summary the principal consultation activities were as follows:
- On Monday 17th February 2020, a launch event was held at South and City College Birmingham's Bordesley Green Campus. 96 individuals attended included representatives of a wide range of community organisations and other stakeholders.
 - A page was created on the Council's website and an online survey was published on the Council's consultation portal *Be Heard*.
 - Information was also published on the Council's social media channels, including Facebook and Twitter, and internally via Yammer.

- Copies of the strategy were placed in the eight local libraries within the area and provided to numerous community organisations and the local Neighbourhood Network partners.
- Direct consultation emails were sent out to approximately 400 stakeholders, predominantly local organisations.
- Printed leaflets were provided to libraries and stakeholders,
- Stakeholders distributed consultation details including the electronic leaflets to large numbers of contacts within their networks
- Meetings were held with 109 stakeholder organisations
- Hard copies and electronic details were provided to the 26 Ward Members and 4 MPs whose areas of responsibility are affected.
- Briefings have been offered to all affected Ward Forums.
- A Ward Members' Forum was established for all affected Ward Members and the initial meeting took place on 15th October 2020.
- Information packs were provided to all local schools and nurseries, including key questions for schools to invite children to consider.
- Contact has also been made with key individuals in the education community, including the chair of the Eastwards Consortium of Birmingham Schools and Children's Centres, to further encourage engagement with schools and nurseries.
- Two focus group sessions were facilitated by local partners
- There were two dedicated meetings of the City Council's Citizens Panel
- Following initial feedback from consultees a second, simpler online survey was set up to provide a fast and simple method for obtaining input from stakeholders who may not have been willing to complete the longer survey. This was intended to facilitate the type of brief comments which are usually gathered at public consultation events.

3.11 Following the initial contact made during the consultation, engagement is ongoing with members of the East Birmingham team regularly attending meetings including Neighbourhood Networks steering groups, the Local Employment and Skills Board and various stakeholder groups including Birmingham Open Space Forum.

3.12 As a consequence of the pandemic, it is recognised that the engagement will have been skewed towards elements of the population who are accessible via digital channels. It is also recognised that there was limited engagement with young persons, and this is particularly important given the demographics of the East Birmingham area.

- 3.13 However, in light of the greatly extended duration and additional channels of engagement it is anticipated that the consultation will have reached at least a similar proportion of the East Birmingham population as would have been expected to be engaged by the original 12-week programme, and that the responses on the Strategy will be generally reflective of the views of the public.
- 3.14 Power, Influence and Participation are key objective themes for the Strategy and community engagement will continue throughout future phases of work, building on the links and contacts established through this initial consultation to involve an ever-greater number of people. As the Strategy gives rise to projects and programmes of work there will be many future opportunities for engagement, collaboration and co-design. During these next stages steps will be taken wherever possible to target engagement towards groups which were less fully represented in the public consultation on the Strategy.
- 3.15 The Strategy has been amended in light of the comments received and events since the preparation of the draft and the amended Strategy is attached as Appendix 1. The main changes are as follows:
- Reference is made to the COVID-19 pandemic and the implications of the pandemic for the East Birmingham area
 - The document refers to the consultation process as described above
 - Additional emphasis has been placed on the importance of securing social value
 - Greater emphasis has been placed on community wealth-building and community enterprise.
 - Wording has been added to emphasise that the Council seeks to empower local communities to become equal partners with the public and private sectors in creating local wealth in their localities.
 - The key role of community and voluntary organisations in the COVID-19 response has been recognised
 - Added reference to the importance of the “anchor institutions” including the Council to job creation and social value
 - A number of amendments have been made in response to general points arising from consultation responses.
- 3.16 In November 2020 a new East Birmingham Board (the Board) was established to take forward the delivery of the Strategy. The Board will be chaired by the Member of Parliament for Birmingham Hodge Hill and the membership will include:
- Local political representation including the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members and ward members

- Senior Officers from the City Council including the Chief Executive and relevant Directors
- Representatives of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
- Representatives of key partners including the West Midlands Combined Authority, Birmingham Children’s Trust, Transport for West Midlands and the Birmingham and Solihull Sustainability and Transformation Partnership
- Representatives of local businesses, educational institutions and the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector

3.17 The key objectives of the new Board are to deliver growth and to bring forward the key interventions to enable local residents to benefit from the jobs and opportunities created. The Board will guide the delivery of growth to maximise opportunities for decarbonisation and to ensure there is a “just transition” to a green economy.

3.18 The Board will:

- Agree and regularly review an implementation plan setting out the projects and activities which will deliver the Strategy.
- Lead dialogue and negotiations with the Government relating to strategic requirements such as funding for major infrastructure
- Provide a forum for the formal agreement of partnership commitments of resources and funding

3.19 The East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy sets out the principles and approach for the delivery of these objectives, as tested by extensive consultation and stakeholder engagement. The Board will have ownership of the Strategy and be accountable for its delivery.

4 Options Considered and Recommended Proposal

4.1 **Option 1: Do Nothing:** Not adopting the Strategy would not support the delivery of inclusive growth in East Birmingham and would prevent the people of East Birmingham who have been engaged during the consultation from having influence over the way in which the inclusive growth agenda is progressed in their area.

4.2 **Option 2: Adopt the Strategy attached as Appendix 1.** This will support the development of a programme of activity which will deliver inclusive growth and regeneration in East Birmingham, guided by a robust Strategy which has incorporated the input of the community and stakeholders.

4.3 Based on the evidence assembled the recommended option is to proceed with adoption.

5 Consultation

- 5.1 Through the Partnership Board, the Strategy was prepared with the input of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, Birmingham and Solihull Clinical Commissioning Group, the West Midlands Combined Authority, West Midlands Police, the Department for Work and Pensions, Department for Business, Employment, Industry and Skills, Homes England, Public Health England and Birmingham Children's Trust.
- 5.2 During the consultation the Strategy has been presented at the first meeting of the East Birmingham Board which includes representatives as set out under section 3.16 of this report.
- 5.3 In addition, a range of other stakeholders have been engaged with via working groups (Health, Employment, Skills and Education, and Development and Infrastructure). There has also been direct engagement with a number of local community stakeholders.
- 5.4 Extensive external consultation on the draft Strategy was carried out during February to October 2020 as outlined in paragraphs 3.6 to 3.12 of this report and Appendix 3.

6 Risk Management

- 6.1 The Strategy and consultation materials have been carefully worded to ensure that the approach and commitments of the City Council and partners is clear. This will minimise the risk of creating false expectations and facilitate ongoing positive engagement and collaboration in the future.
- 6.2 Further risks during delivery will be managed at a project and programme level and with the input and guidance of the East Birmingham Board.

7 Compliance Issues:

7.1 How are the recommended decisions consistent with the City Council's priorities, plans and strategies?

- 7.1.1 The East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy is consistent with the Council Plan 2018-2022 (2019 Update). The principles and objectives of the Strategy are aligned with the six Council Plan Outcomes: Birmingham is an entrepreneurial city to learn, work and invest in, Birmingham is an aspirational city to grow up in, Birmingham is a fulfilling city to age well in, Birmingham is a great city to live in, Birmingham residents gain the maximum benefit from hosting the Commonwealth Games, and Birmingham is a city that takes a leading role in tackling climate change.

7.2 Legal Implications

7.2.1 The Council has general power of Competence under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 and it is using this to undertake the production of the draft Strategy. Whilst not a statutory document, the draft Strategy will provide guidance to support the East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy in alignment with the Birmingham Development Plan 2031. The consultation will follow the principles set out in the Birmingham Statement of Community Involvement (2020)

7.3 Financial Implications

7.3.1 The East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy has been prepared using existing Inclusive Growth Directorate (Planning and Development) staff resources and the staff resources of East Birmingham Board partners. The costs of the consultation, and of the amendment and adoption of the East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy will be met from the approved Planning and Development revenue budget for 2020/21 and 2021/22.

7.3.2 The East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy sets out an approach to improving the City Council and Board partners' performance based around partnership working and public sector reform methodologies. In the first instance this work will utilise existing approved resources (both staff and other resources).

7.3.3 Future schemes delivered by the City Council as a result of the strategy will be subject to approval through the Council's Gateway and related Financial Approval Framework, which will include the identification of financial implications (both capital and revenue) and associated resources.

7.4 Procurement Implications (if required)

7.4.1 No implications.

7.5 Human Resources Implications (if required)

7.5.1 No implications.

7.6 Public Sector Equality Duty

7.6.1 The East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy is being prepared in line with Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 in ensuring that public bodies in the exercise of their functions have due regard to and consider the needs of all individuals in shaping policy. An Equality Impact Analysis has been undertaken and is attached at Appendix 2.

8 Appendices

Appendix 1: East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy

Appendix 2: Equality Impact Analysis

Appendix 3: Consultation Statement

9 Background Documents

East Birmingham-North Solihull (EBNS) Stage 1: Baseline (Peter Brett/OCSI 2017)