

# **BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL**

## **CO-ORDINATING O&S COMMITTEE – PUBLIC MEETING**

**10.00 hours on Friday, 18 November 2022, Committee Rooms 3 & 4,**

**Council House, Victoria Square, Birmingham B1 1BB**

### **Action Notes**

#### **Present:**

Councillor Albert Bore (Chair) Cllr. Kerry Jenkins (Chair)

Councillors: Jack Deakin, Mohammed Idrees, Chaman Lal, Ewan Mackey, Saima Suleman, Alex Yip

#### **Also Present:**

Cllr. Francis, Cabinet Member Digital, Culture, Heritage and Tourism

Peter Bishop, Director of Digital and Customer Services

Raj S Mack, Head of Digital City and Innovation

Eleri Roberts, Assistant Director Partnerships Insight and Prevention

Alison Roberts, Head of Communications, Commonwealth Games 2022

Wendy Griffiths, Assistant Director Customer Services and Business Support

Christian Scade, Head of Scrutiny and Committee Services

Fiona Bottrill, Senior Overview and Scrutiny Manager

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

The Chair advised that this meeting would be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet site ([www.youtube.com/channel/UCT2kT7ZRPFCXq6\\_5dnVnYlw](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCT2kT7ZRPFCXq6_5dnVnYlw)) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there were confidential or exempt items.

### **2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Cllr. Mick Brown and Cllr. Deidre Alden. The Chair informed the Committee that he had to leave the meeting at 11.00 and the Deputy Chair, Cllr. Jenkins would take over as Chair. He asked the Committee to agree to take Item on the agenda as Item 5.

#### **RESOLVED: -**

That Item 7 on the agenda be moved to item 5.

### **3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

None declared.

### **4. ACTION NOTES –14 OCTOBER 2002 AND ACTION TRACKER**

The Action Notes of the meeting on the 14 October 2022 were agreed and the Action Tracker was noted. It was agreed that officers would be asked to attend the December meeting to provide updates on the actions from the September meeting if written updates are not provided.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- That the action notes of the formal meeting held on 14 October 2022 were agreed.
- That the action tracker was noted, and officers will be asked to attend the next meeting to update on actions from the September meeting if a written response is not provided.

### **5. CUSTOMER SERVICES PROGRAMME SCRUTINY TASK AND FINISH GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE AND UPDATE (ITEM 7 ON THE AGENDA)**

The Chair provided an update on the meetings arranged for the Customer Services Task and Finish Group and it was noted that the meeting to consider the work with the Highways Service has been postponed.

A report on the work of the Task and Finish Group will be presented to Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 9 December. It was noted that a report will also go to Cabinet on the 13 December 2022.

#### **RESOLVED: -**

- That the terms of reference for the Customer Services Programme Scrutiny Task and Finish Group are agreed and the dates of the meetings noted.

### **6. CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO PRIORITIES (ITEM 5 ON THE AGENDA)**

The Chair welcomed Cllr. Francis, the Cabinet Member for Digital, Culture, Heritage and Tourism to the meeting. Cllr. Francis explained that she had taken over this portfolio from the Deputy Leader and part of this role was as digital ambassador. She was accompanied by the Director of Digital and Customer Services and the Head of

Digital City and Innovation who gave the presentation and highlighted the following points:

- Clarifying the term 'digital' and how this work will improve services and outcomes for citizens, the Council, the city and region.
- The Council works with partners to deliver the strategy including the West Midlands Combined Authority.
- The priorities, programmes and outcomes for the Council's Digital Strategy, Digital City Road Map and Digital Inclusion Strategy
- The outcomes dashboard set out how the strategies fit with the Be Bold Themes, Grand Challenges and Levelling Up Objectives.
- The example was provided illustrating how data and insight is informing the cost-of-living programme.
- Digital security is a high priority for the Council ensuring services are available 24/7 and the security of residents' data.
- Key elements of the Digital City Programme include supporting entrepreneurship and innovation, digital inclusion for citizens and businesses, digital inward investment
- The Council is working with other organisations including businesses and the community and voluntary sector to develop the governance structures to facilitate implementation of the strategies.
- Working with the City Observatory, public, private and academic organisations the council will develop a Data Charter.
- It was noted that digital inclusion was an issue before the pandemic, but this has highlighted issues for those who are vulnerable.
- The pandemic also illustrated how good analysis of data can support those who are most vulnerable.
- The Council's approach to information governance was a thematic approach focusing on legal, contract procurement and cyber security and involved technical systems and training to address human factors.
- Data Protection Impact Assessments are undertaken on a quarterly basis. It was noted that most common cause of data breaches is email.
- The Information Commissioner's work on ethics looks at targeted support based on data.

In response to questions from Members the following information was provided:

- The importance of making sure that the source and timescales for the data used is reliable.
- The importance of providing training for staff and elected members in cyber security.

- Birmingham has received positive feedback about the Digital City Strategy from other areas and is on 5 – 10 year journey to reach the level of cities such as Singapore in some services.
- Developing digital communities involves working with communities to identify those who are hard to reach.
- The timescales for the Digital City and Digital Strategy are set out in the actions plans which will be circulated to the Committee.
- New Ways of Working across the Council has benefits for staff wellbeing and council efficiency and must also benefit citizens.
- The delivery of Broadband is dependent on private providers and timescales for this is slipping and guaranteed speeds are reducing.
- There are examples of other local authorities that have intervened in the Broadband market, and this is an opportunity for Birmingham to use assets as leverage.
- Expanding Broadband will provide employment and skills opportunities that will benefit the Economy. It was recommended that this issue could be considered further by the Economy and Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- The issue with the council telephone numbers is being resolved and calls will be transferred to mobiles or laptops.
- Information from digital systems will be used to manage staff performance but not at the expense of health and wellbeing.
- The importance of giving young people opportunities to experience work using digital skills.
- Issues relating to 5G masts would be considered through the planning application process.

**RESOLVED:**

- That the report on the Cabinet Member Portfolio Priorities be noted.
- That the Digital City and Digital Strategy action plans to be circulated to the Committee.
- That Co-ordinating OSC to include email and digital security on the work programme.

## 7. COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY UPDATE

The Assistant Director Partnerships Insight and Prevention and the Head of Communications Commonwealth Games 2022 gave a presentation on the Council's Communication's Strategy which set out the following:

- There are two main objectives for the Communications Strategy to support the Corporate Plan and to support planned, proactive strategic communications focussed on the Corporate Plan priorities.
- The Council's strategic approach to communication was outlined and the ROSIE principles explained (research, objectives and goalsetting, strategy and planning, implementation and evaluation)
- A communications forward plan sets out campaign activity that is agreed with Corporate Directors.
- Work with the City Observatory will identify audiences and channels and help address digital inclusion.
- The Council used a number of digital channels to communicate and has recently set up a Tic Tok account which provides more 'fun' information while Twitter provides news / information and also uses Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram.
- Evaluation is undertaken to ensure delivery of outcomes and identify learning from the different campaigns.
- Information on how the Council identifies and communicated with different audiences and the communication channels that are used.
- It was noted that Birmingham has a national audience including central government.
- Examples were provided on the Be Bold Be Birmingham, BrumWeCan and HelpinBrum campaigns including the development with the community, online and offline communication and evaluation of media and social media coverage.
- The Be Bold, Be Birmingham campaign was developed before the Commonwealth Games and will continue to underpin the new Corporate Plan.

Members congratulated the team on the No Bull campaign during the pandemic which provided information to residents on local infection and vaccination rates. During question and answers the following issues were discussed:

- Different parts of the Council have different social media branding e.g. twitter handle is Bham, but the old Twitter handle is BCC and the branding for the ward and council YouTube accounts is different. There are 120 social media accounts across council services. The Communications Team have undertaken an audit of the social media corporate accounts and will look at how to bring in consistency with the Be Bold, Be Birmingham brand providing the themes for the next 4 – 5 years.

- Work will be carried out across council services to help social media posts to be engaging.
- Some residents have access to social media but struggle to access services. Targeted leaflets are important particularly for the cost-of-living crisis including translations into the 10 top languages, braille and sign language and that these are available to front line staff in housing and adult social care and for members to use.
- How to continue to celebrate Be Bold, Be Birmingham when many people are in difficult circumstances with the cost-of-living crisis is being considered? The legacy includes the European Athletics Championships will use the Be Bold brand and other programmes identified by Directors. It was recognised that the tone of the campaign may change over the next few months.
- The legacy from the Commonwealth Games includes distributing the assets and the Communications team is informing residents when activities and work takes place and communicating outcomes.
- The Be Bold, Be Birmingham campaign was running alongside the Commonwealth Games brand and work will continue to build this across social and non-social media. Focus groups have been and will continue to be held to understand the brand recognition.
- The numbers showing social media reach may include duplication where people use more than one social media platform, but the social media audit will develop understanding of the people who use different platforms to inform how to target audiences and match to the campaign.
- There has been a large increase in the Tic Tok audience because the account has recently been set up and enables more engagement on fun / interesting facts about Birmingham to be communicated.
- Issues that are posted on open social media on hyper local issues are picked up by the Communications Team and linked to the relevant service and customer service team.
- The Communications Team is now within the directorate that also has the Public Participation Team that will be up and running in early 2023 which will help co-ordinate work.
- The Committee considered how best to communicate the work of Overview and Scrutiny Committees and suggested the development of a Scrutiny Communications Strategy and improving the quality of streaming of meetings.

**RESOLVED:**

- That the report be noted
- That the Chair considers with officers the development of a Communications Strategy for Scrutiny during 2022/23.

**8. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 202/23**

The Committee Chairs present provided an update on the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees from December 2022 – February 2023. It was noted that:

- The Economy and Skills OSC will undertake evidence gathering for the Employment and Skills Inquiry at the Committee meetings and Task and Finish Group meetings.
- The Sustainability and Transport OSC will undertake a site visit in December 2022.
- The Housing and Neighbourhoods OSC will focus on fly-tipping and cleaner streets including learning from other authorities.
- The Education and Children's Social Care OSC will continue to receive reports from the Director of Children's Services and also the Children's Trust. The Committee has met with the SEND Commissioner. Other work is being finalised.
- There will be a meeting in December on Domestic Abuse that will report to the single issue Co-ordinating OSC meeting in February 2023.
- The dates will be confirmed for the Leader and Cabinet Member for Social Justice, Community Safety and Equalities to attend future meetings of Co-ordinating OSC.
- The Early Intervention and Prevention work across the Council will be included in the Co-ordinating OSC work programme.

**RESOLVED:**

- That the Scrutiny Committee work programmes be noted.
- That The Co-ordinating OSC work programme is noted and the Early Intervention and Prevention work is reported to this Committee.

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

There were no requests for Call In for Co-ordinating OSC. It was noted that the Call In request on the Cabinet decision on the Housing Repairs Maintenance and Investment 2024 will be considered by the Housing and Neighbourhood OSC on 29 November 2022.

**10. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

None

**11. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that next meeting of the Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be 9 December 2022 at 10.00

**12. AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS**

**RESOLVED:**

That in an urgent situation between meetings the Chair, jointly with the relevant Chief Officer, has authority to act on behalf of the Committee.

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The meeting ended at 12:14 hours.