

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

ECONOMY, SKILLS & TRANSPORT O&S COMMITTEE –

PUBLIC MEETING

**10.30AM hours on 10th October 2018, Committee Room 6, Council House –
Action Notes**

Present:

Councillor Tahir Ali (Chair)

Councillors Phil Davis, Fred Grindrod, Karen McCarthy, Simon Morrall, Julien Pritchard and Ken Wood

Also Present:

Councillor Ian Ward, Leader

Ian MacLeod, Assistant Director, Regeneration

Baseema Begum, Research & Policy Officer

Rose Kiely, Group Overview & Scrutiny Manager

1. NOTICE OF RECORDING

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

2. APOLOGIES

None received.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

4. ECONOMY AND SKILLS ACTION NOTES

The Committee received the action notes for the meetings held on the 6th June 2018 and 4th July 2018.

The following amendments were requested:

A correction to the spelling of the name of Deputy Leader on the notes of the meeting of the 6th June 2018.

That the discussion on the how investment in the West Midlands Local Government Fund is utilised is added to the items for consideration as part of the Committee's future work programme and the notes of the 4th July are updated to reflect this.

The Chair, Cllr Ali re-arranged the agenda to take the item on the 'Economic Impact of the Commonwealth Games Village' first.

5. ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE COMMONWEALTH GAMES VILLAGE

(See document No. 1)

Ian MacLeod, Assistant Director, Regeneration outlined the key points from his presentation detailing the economic benefits to the Perry Barr and wider area during and after the Commonwealth Games including the circa 4000 new homes that will be created for people to live in including some affordable housing. The significant investment into transport infrastructure and connectivity was highlighted to get the city ready to deal with the approximate 769,000 expected visitors and media staff who will be staying in Birmingham.

It was further explained that the local public realm and street scene will be improved. Furthermore at least 300 apprenticeship opportunities will be created with more than 3,000 jobs created on site during the construction of the Games Village.

Finally a timeline was shared outlining the next steps and ongoing engagement activity.

During discussion with members the following key points were made:

- Issues relating to specific areas in relation to the Games can be picked up by other scrutiny committees as relevant to their portfolio.
- As part of the procurement process the city will adhere to the Birmingham Social Value Charter in ensuring that the contractor responsible for building the Games village gives preference where possible to local people and businesses to benefit from opportunities for work, apprenticeships and providing labour and materials.
- There was some discussion on ensuring that alternative ways of building are considered as part of the Games village construction. It was confirmed that this was being considered to achieve set timescales.
- The city is experiencing a huge scale of growth in terms of construction and this is a challenge however the Games contractor is confident that there is capacity in the local supply chain to meet the need.
- Viability and affordability is the key issue in relation to providing affordable housing as part of the Games village legacy. Currently this stands as 344 units which is 24% of the scheme as a whole. This issue will be discussed in further detail at Planning Committee.
- In terms of the redevelopment of Perry Barr Station it was emphasised that the train service needs to be more frequent to encourage more people to use it

and enable modal shift. It was confirmed that Transport for West Midlands and train operators are working on this however it is dependent on the level of patronage. The A34 Perry Barr main corridor is well served with regular bus services and the addition of a SPRINT Bus will provide more choice for passengers.

- In terms of encouraging the area to be a cohesive and thriving centre there is a need to look at the width of the road to ensure pedestrian safety and this is being looked at by the City Council's Highway team.
- Jobs and apprenticeships opportunities are hugely important and securing a legacy of employment opportunities after the Games. This includes the Birmingham Scholarship programme ensuring jobs and apprenticeships can be secured in particular wards affected by high unemployment across deprived areas in the city.
- Work with colleges and further education institutions is equally important to ensure young people in particular those that have difficulty accessing training and employment opportunities can gain the necessary skills to allow them to compete for jobs in the future. It is worth noting that opportunities are wider than construction and take in HR/admin/finance and other support services and so colleges and training providers need to be able to cater for this.
- There will be 12,500 volunteers needed to support the games and there will be a drive to engage with young people and recruit those in deprived areas as part of this. There is also a commitment to provide these young people with a meaningful qualification as part of their volunteering experience so that it can be used to help with further training or employment opportunities.
- There was concern that the quality of apprenticeships on offer should be wide ranging and a quality standard set so that the opportunity can lead to long term jobs and careers and are not exploitative. As part of the procurement process the City Council should set a standard that employers sign up to.
- Reference was made to the possibility of providing an on-site training facility as there was during the London Olympic 2012 Games that could benefit the local community to access training and provide life-changing opportunities. The key would be for it to be community focussed and accessible.
- Members were keen to see the city's Jobs & Skills strategy once it has been finalised. There was interest shown in ensuring that the city works with neighbouring authorities' colleges and training providers on provision of apprenticeships and taught courses.
- The economy is forecasted to grow by £0.5billion (based on Glasgow 2014 Games) over the Games period and this will have a knock-on effect in creating more jobs. Based on Glasgow there were 22,000 jobs and this covered a whole spectrum of activity but not all of this will carry on. Making sure that opportunities are inclusive is the challenge.
- It was highlighted that there was currently no individual lead on employment issues within the City Council needed to tackle the jobs & skills issues within the city.

RESOLVED:-

The Leader, Cllr Ian Ward requested that the Committee undertake a piece of work looking at the impact of hosting the Commonwealth Games on job creation in the city.

6. LEADER: PRIORITIES AND UPCOMING WORK AREAS RELATING TO THE ECONOMY AND SKILLS PORTFOLIO

The Leader, Cllr Ian Ward highlighted the key issue of housing targets for the city to achieve as set out in the Birmingham Development Plan 2031. The increase in population will mean an additional 51,000 homes are needed within the city's boundaries meaning that to achieve this will require the public and private sectors to work together to deliver this housing growth. Currently under the expansion planned an additional 10,000 homes could be delivered due to the approvals for plans to build homes in the city centre bringing the total to 61,000 homes within the City over the next 13 years. In September 2018 the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) set a new standard for residential achievement.

As part of the housing growth major housing developments are planned such as the Langley Sustainable Urban Extension that will provide 6,000 new homes. At Icknield Port Loop there will be 3,000 new homes and further acquisition of the old children's hospital land will give another 800 new homes.

In the City centre there are developments with the Berkley Group's acquisition of a site at Eastside locks. There is also a site at Snow Hill Queensway for a residential tower to be built. Across these two sites an additional 2,000 high quality homes will be provided. An additional 3,000 homes will also be developed by another housing builder and so a huge amount of regeneration is happening across the city.

The planning application for the Commonwealth Games Athletes village has also been submitted.

Moving onto skills issues the Leader identified the skills deficit and up-skilling as two key areas that the city needs to tackle urgently to help people gain and sustain employment.

Although the investment in the city centre is essential and important it does act as a catalyst for the rest of the city and the impact is felt elsewhere. Members were keen to learn about the regeneration in neighbourhoods and the rest of the city in terms of managing the current investment so that local areas do not suffer due to the pressure of new development. However it was noted that much of this was dictated by funding from Government. Cllr Ward confirmed that the Urban Centres Framework will be launched towards the end of the year and will be focussed on the regeneration of local centres for example Bordesley Green.

It was noted that a strategic framework was needed to ensure that growth benefitted all areas especially in terms of support in accessing jobs for instance the need for connected public transport that allows people to access opportunities in other areas of the city. It was confirmed that the West Midlands Combined Authority are responsible for regional inclusive growth.

It was felt that sustainable and green policies should be embedded as part of the wider economic strategy ensuring and encouraging where possible cleaner ways of

doing things for example creating more jobs locally meaning that fewer journeys are made which impacts on the level of congestion and air pollution. The joint working with Sandwell Council on the Freight strategy was mentioned as part of the work on easing congestion and cleaner air that would be achieved by lorries being taken out of the city centre. In addition it was noted that the Committee should in the future monitor the impact of the introduction of the Clean Air Zone on businesses and that the wider issues on the challenge of clean air in the city should be tackled across the various Scrutiny Committee portfolios. The Leader confirmed that sustainability issues are addressed within the Birmingham Development Plan with a number policy requirements.

Members raised the issue of producing affordable housing and it was confirmed that the city is outperforming other core cities in respect of this. Birmingham is currently at 25.3% against an ambitious target of 35% contained within the Birmingham Development Plan for social affordable housing. The Leader confirmed that viability issues meant that the set standard is not currently being achieved due to the way that housing growth is now being delivered versus how it was traditionally achieved namely through the building of council houses by the City Council.

Reference was made to the Curzon masterplan that was featured in the local media and the design of Curzon station was praised. However it was added that other areas within the vicinity could do with investment to improve the public realm such as the Duddeston area that is close to the new HS2 station.

The Leader confirmed that he is the lead on the industrial strategy on behalf of the Combined Authority and confirmed that he will attend a future meeting of the Committee to discuss this in further detail.

RESOLVED:-

- 1) Leader to attend a future meeting to discuss the local Industrial Strategy and work that the Combined Authority is doing in relation to the jobs and skills agenda.
- 2) The Committee should in the future monitor the impact of the introduction of the Clean Air Zone on businesses.
- 3) There should be a joined up approach to the Clean Air challenge across the Scrutiny Committees.

7. WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE ECONOMY AND SKILLS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2018/19

(See document No. 2)

Cllr Grindrod requested that City Council's Commission into Brexit is approached to ask if a representative of the Committee could join the Commission or attend meetings as an observer.

The impact of the introduction of the Clean Air Zone (CAZ) on businesses in the city centre was raised which led to Cllr Grindrod asking about how all the committees are going to work together to achieve a joined up approach to air pollution and the CAZ that it would be useful for the Co-ordinating committee to think about/agree a way forward.

RESOLVED:-

The City Council Commission into Brexit is approached to enquire if it is appropriate for a representative of the Economy & Skills Overview & Scrutiny Committee to join its panel or is given permission to attend meetings to observe proceedings.

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

None.

9. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

None.

10. AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS

Agreed.

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.

The meeting finished at 1155 hours.