

**BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL**

<p><b>HALL GREEN DISTRICT COMMITTEE 22 SEPTEMBER 2015</b></p>
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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HALL GREEN DISTRICT COMMITTEE  
HELD ON TUESDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2015 AT 1400 HOURS  
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 6, COUNCIL HOUSE, BIRMINGHAM**

**PRESENT:** - Councillors Mohammed Azim, Sam Burden, Jerry Evans, Kerry Jenkins, Tony Kennedy, Habib Rehman, Claire Spencer, Martin Straker-Welds and Lisa Trickett.

**ALSO PRESENT:** -

Karen Cheney	- District Head Selly Oak (Interim cover for Hall Green District)
Emma Leaman	- Assistant Director (Infrastructure)
Carolyn Snaith	- BEP Link with Hall Green Schools
Andrew Barnes	- Employment Commissioning Manager
Neil Vyse	- Principal Development Planning Officer
Ian MacLeod	- Development Planning Manager
Natalie Potter	- Local Housing Manager
Marie Reynolds	- Committee Services

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**NOTICE OF RECORDING**

175 The Chairman advised that the meeting would be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet site and members of the press/public may record and take photographs.

The whole of the meeting would be filmed except where there were confidential or exempt information.

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**APOLOGIES**

176 Apologies were submitted on behalf of Councillors Bowles, Fazal and Quinn for their inability to attend the meeting.

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**MINUTES**

177 The Minutes of the meeting of the Hall Green District Committee held on 14 July 2015 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

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**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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The Chairman reminded Members to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interests relating to items of business to be discussed at this and all future meetings. No declarations of interest were made.

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**EDUCATION PRESENTATION**

Emma Leaman, Assistant Director (Infrastructure) circulated the following information relating to the Education Services Core Offer 2015-16 and associated documentation:-

(See document No. 1)

Councillor Martin Straker-Welds whilst referring to his role as the Education, Corporate Parenting and Special Educational Needs Champion and the work that he was involved in as the district champion, subsequently introduced Emma Leaman, Assistant Director (Infrastructure) and Carolyn Snaith, BEP Link with Hall Green Schools (Head of Wheelers Lane Technology College).

Emma Leaman reported that it was a good opportunity to begin the engagement process with districts and as a result of this, referred to the information pack that she had circulated at the meeting relating to the Birmingham City Council Education Offer and also referred to the Birmingham Education Partnership (BEP), which was a new development in bringing forward school led school improvement.

She highlighted that in order to help members support delivery of the city's education vision and priorities and to assist with the range of issues that could be raised by constituents, the initial information pack had been provided and suggested that as this was the first district meeting that any feedback relating to information members would find of value in the future would be most helpful.

Emma Leaman referred to the core offer document which outlined the different services offered to support schools and specifically referred to page 7 that detailed the key priorities for 2015/16. She highlighted that also contained in the pack in order to help and navigate was the 'Right Service, Right Time' which was a guidance for practitioners that could also assist members in signposting to the right service, if unsure of where to find the support. Reference was made to the 'Special Educational Needs' leaflet and the website 'mycareinbirmingham.org.uk which provided details around the 'Local Offer' and further reference was made to the Guardian supplement, that had been designed to attract professionals to work in Birmingham.

In response to a question regarding the response to the Guardian encouraging more professionals to enter the city workforce, Emma Leaman agreed to find out the relevant information.

Emma Leaman provided a brief overview of BEP whereupon its objectives were concerned with school improvement, safeguarding and sharing good practice. She referred to the local information that she had provided relating to the schools within the district highlighting that they had tried to capture the major capital investment in schools, and where schools had been expanded to meet basic needs albeit the document was still in the development stage, due to the necessity of more updated information before it was available on line. She further highlighted page 5 relating to the number of births and how they related to the cohorts of children coming through and regarding the school place planning cycle, she confirmed that the department was at the moment refreshing and revising their forecasts for the number of school places required from 2016 that would be available in November 2015, which she agreed to circulate through the Chairman.

In response to members' comments, Emma Leaman confirmed that the department was doing a great deal of work in capturing the growth around the population. She highlighted the unprecedented level of cohort growth (children moving through education) which was quite hard to predict as the pattern was changing from one year to the next. She stated that despite providing a lot of additional places to deal with the birth increase, the cohort growth as it moved through the school was becoming more rapid especially in years 2 and 3 and added, that they were in the process of putting extra classes in certain parts of the city to meet this growing demand.

Carolyn Snaith gave an overview of Birmingham Education Partnership (BEP) highlighting that there was a subscription side that schools could choose to be a part of if they wished, although, every education provider in the city was part of the establishment. She stated that BEP was a working partnership with the city council and was a route to helping schools improve at every level across the city.

She stated that schools in Birmingham were performing at 80% which was good to outstanding and in Hall Green District they were performing slightly higher at 84%. She reported that school improvement was about getting schools from good to outstanding and ideally from outstanding to super outstanding and through BEP, schools would help schools to improve at every level.

She stated that all head teachers had a voice through BEP and subsequently referred to the election model that had been adopted; the points of contact and the fact that schools had been divided into districts, which would improve links with communication in the future. The key priority was to ensure that every child attended a good or better school and to work even better to drive standards. It was noted the importance the part schools played in improving the city as the place to be and grow up in, and it was requested that members continued to celebrate and promote the success of the schools in Birmingham that were doing an excellent job.

She referred to the peer to peer review system which all schools were required to set up through BEP and detailed how it worked with schools viewing each other's practices, and providing robust challenging friendly feedback where improvements could be made. Further reference was made to the work with

BEP and the city council relating to the data dash board and improving the format in order to be more proactive in recognising areas of concern and where the need was to put the most effort and energy into improvements. It was noted that BEP would now stand alongside with Ofsted inspections and be part of the requirement to attend and have a conversation with Ofsted. It was also noted that a great deal of work had been undertaken around governors and governorship and a number of city-wide events had just come to an end which included the reading across the city.

She concluded by stating that the heart of BEP was about harnessing the 80% of schools that were good and constantly challenging each other in order to continue to raise standards.

In response to members' comments, Emma Leaman explained the different areas of capital funding and where the responsibility lay, adding that she would be happy to schedule a separate meeting with members, in order to discuss in more detail if they so wished.

She referred to the net migration and confirmed that the department had absolutely modelled the net migration figures into the forecasting and into the sufficiency planning. She stated that it was a key part of the forecasting and highlighted that when patterns were analysed at very local level where net migration was happening, there was a lot of variance from year to year and locality to locality and therefore, it was very hard to predict where it would emerge and subsequently, highlighted the challenges around expanding the primary infrastructure with the reduction of the birth rates for 2016/17.

With regard to building bridges between schools and businesses, she confirmed that it was very much on the agenda of the district work of BEP and referred to the work undertaken through Birmingham's Youth Promise. She stated that the work being done to plug businesses into schools was moving forward quite robustly and referred to the consideration of the sustainability agenda, whereby the google academy in the library was brokered into schools. She added that she believed BEP offered exciting opportunities in being able to reach schools quite systematically.

She referred to the area relating to special needs, and one of the wider conversations that had started to happen with all of the schools and through partners in BEP, on how to make sure that flexibility was in place to meet children with special needs across the spectrum.

With regard to school expansion and the associated issues on top of the day job she stated was challenging. She referred to a document that had been submitted to scrutiny that colleagues might find useful in how that work was panning out and reiterated the growth happening year on year with the net migration figures.

With regard to working at district level, she confirmed that it was a useful way of breaking down information to share. She stated that the department was aware that parents would be looking at schools places at a local level not at ward or district level, and therefore in the school planning process, they focused at a local level.

Councillor Martin Straker-Welds concluded by thanking Emma and Carolyn for presenting and expressed his gratitude for issues being picked up and for the provision of updates in the future. He referred to the importance of BEP and the improvement of schools by working together and promoting the positive actions that were taking part in the district. He further referred to the various issues relating to planning placements and the ways of working across sectors in order to capitalise on the education enrichment within the district.

The Chairman stated that an update on Springfield Junior School would be picked up outside the meeting as a matter of urgency.

Upon further consideration, it was:-

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**RESOLVED**

That the presentation and comments be noted.

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**HALL GREEN POLICY STATEMENT WORKING TOWARDS THE DISTRICT COMMUNITY PLAN**

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The following Hall Green Policy Statement was submitted:-

(See document No. 2)

Councillor Claire Spencer introduced the statement and subsequently provided a breakdown of the document. She highlighted the district priorities that were split down into; employment skills and training, health, housing and clean and green and safe. She stated that under the 4 categories the areas were broken down again into headline issues, the approach to tackling these issues and the challenges as a result of the issues and the neighbourhood challenges that may link with those issues. She referred to the category of jobs and skills and the access to those jobs and skills and how the district might consider that area of work and the pieces of activities it might want to do in line with the jobs and skills plan.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Spencer for her work and stated that it would be taken to the Community Plan scheduled for January 2016.

As a result of the introduction of the information, in response to comments and questions from members the following were amongst the points raised:-

Although challenges around the enterprise zones and skills were welcomed several areas that included health, fly-tipping and some form of food waste collection was suggested should be addressed and specifically the retention of the planning guidance to keep code 6 as a policy objective.

In response to the above, the Chairman suggested that at this point in time, the committee should concentrate on the principles although comments would be noted. He subsequently provided a brief explanation on the work albeit early days that the district had undertaken relating to the new process, and the policy

statement which was the model that was now being adopted by other districts across the city. He referred to the district convention scheduled in November and members' involvement regarding this area of work, and further referred to the championing of work by members, and also the necessity of a timeline to all members, in order to establish who would be involved with what.

Councillor Spencer confirmed that points discussed would be added to the substantive plan. She highlighted the areas of the work that they were pushing for behind the scenes relating to the plan, which were the commissioning and procurement and the normal day to day running of services. She stated that as districts did not hold their own budgets any longer, clearly the next best thing ultimately was to be there when the services were shaped in the first place, and subsequently provided an example of how the plan could be used to push for resources not just at city level but also at a local level.

Several votes of thanks were submitted from members to Councillor Spencer for her contribution of work.

Following further comments, it was highlighted the complexity of the work that had been undertaken and the importance of ensuring that the document formed the framework for future thinking, and that the district housing panel now fed into the process, so that there was an overall governance. Further reference was made to the need for the district to look at new ways of approaching and dealing with issues, and a greater understanding of localities and how members could shape what they considered would work.

The Chairman highlighted that the principle of the plan should be action orientated and deliverable, and requested that the committee agreed the policy statement and that information would be circulated to members shortly on the way forward.

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#### **DISTRICT APPOINTMENT FOR 2015/16**

Upon nomination:-

#### **RESOLVED:-**

That the Chairman (Councillor Tony Kennedy) be appointed as Employment, Jobs and Skills Champion in 2015/16 for Hall Green District.

The Chairman invited members for their assistance in this role.

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#### **HALL GREEN DISTRICT JOBS AND SKILLS PLAN – DRAFT – JULY 2015**

The following Hall Green Jobs and Skills Plan – Draft as at July 2015 was submitted:-

(See document No. 3)

Andrew Barnes, Employment and Commissioning Manager introduced the plan stating that it had been drafted by officers and therefore any feedback from members would be welcome. He provided a brief background of the plan on how it had been formalised from the last district convention and subsequent meetings. He referred to the significant negotiations undertaken with key stakeholders and the way in which job centres were playing a more active part in community development and local responses to employment. He referred to the priorities that stood in the plan at the moment and the fact that the committee would endorse those and might like to add more detail as the plan progressed.

He stated that the next step would be establishing the structures in terms of local ownership of the plan, and that the employment and skills team would support the district in taking it forward. He referred to the very recent district champion nominated to lead the process at local level, and suggested that an employment and skills theme group should be formed in order to take ownership of the actions, and for the responsibility of developing further thinking around the plan.

As a result of the introduction of the plan, in response to comments and questions from members, the following were amongst the points raised:-

Andrew Barnes confirmed that the issue relating to jobs and there having to be opportunities was partly why the engagement with local SME's was so important, it was recognised that there was a current gap which needed addressing and that also played into the agenda around enterprise support.

He referred to the plans being locally focused although not being able to ignore the wider activities within the city. He highlighted the need to make local people more equipped with training, skills and an awareness to be more willing and prepared to travel into opportunities created in other areas of the city and the sub-regions, adding that the approach was a balance between the very local and making sure that the areas linked together across the piece.

He referred to the points raised relating to Connexions and the Youth Service stating that the plan did not necessarily reflect what was exactly taking place in the district. He referred to the work that was being undertaken by Chris Jordan's team linking the careers and youth services together. Further reference was made to the work around the European bid relating to the youth employment initiative, adding that they would very much like to see some of the youth service access points being linked in with that provision if the bid was successful.

With regard to the skills issue and access to skills for the adult workforce, he confirmed was a key issue and believed that it would come out on a more global scale around some of the FE area service reviews that were currently taking place. He referred to previous comments from Councillor Spencer regarding the whole area being a focus of a neighbourhood challenge activity and how the theme group would need to look at how that area of work was taken forward.

He highlighted that as a district champion had now been appointed, anticipated that following this meeting, a meeting would be scheduled shortly to discuss pulling the theme group together very quickly.

He referred to Sparkbrook Ward and the clusters of super output areas where there was very high unemployment, and the map in the plan that also indicated other areas where there was a need to focus on clusters, which included north Springfield and other areas in Hall Green Ward. He added that the nature of the plan was to target those areas in the district where there was the greatest need.

He agreed with regard to the enterprise being focused on creative capital and the night time economy, and believed that the wording within the document was very much trying to build on the cultural reputational capital within the district, adding that it needed to be articulated in more depth.

The Chairman thanked Andrew Barnes for attending the meeting and confirmed that a note would be circulated shortly inviting members to join the effort.

Upon further consideration, it was:-

182 **RESOLVED:-**

That the information and comments be noted.

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**COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE BRIEFING**

183 Karen Cheney, District Head Selly Oak (Interim cover for Hall Green District) provided an update on community governing arrangements. She expressed a vote of thanks to Salim Miah, Interim Lead for the Hall Green District for his support in this role which finished at the end of July 2015.

She stated that there was an interim structure in place from August to most probably the beginning of November 2015 which is where district heads have picked up additional districts to support, and subsequently confirmed that she would be covering Hall Green District in this instance, adding that although based at Selly Oak, she would be visiting Hall Green District office on a regular basis. She stated that the new structure was moving forward and would be with the trade unions shortly.

She confirmed that in terms of governance, training had already taken place with the chairs and vice-chairs of districts. She referred to the neighbourhood challenge believing that it had been agreed, and stated that in a complete municipal year, it was anticipated that 2 or 3 neighbourhood challenges would be undertaken by districts.

At this juncture in the meeting, members disagreed with the fact that a neighbourhood challenge had been set whereupon a discussion ensued. Members were of the opinion that although jobs and skills would be a priority for the district, it had not yet been agreed what the first neighbourhood challenge would be.



Following further discussions, the Chairman suggested that it not be referred to as the first challenge, but to continue with the work and discuss further outside this meeting.

Karen Cheney made reference to the district priority statement which would lead into the district community plan, and the date that had now been set for the district convention, which was part of the responsibility within the new district committee format.

In terms of ward committees, she confirmed that some members had already contacted her regarding meetings and that the training sessions for ward chairs had now been opened up to all members, with the new focus for wards on community engagement. She highlighted that the choice was with members on how they went forward with their ward meetings. She referred to the 2 community governance managers that were now in place covering the north and south of the city, and that Kay Thomas was the officer covering Hall Green District. She added that Kay would be happy to assist members with the writing up of an agenda, publicity and the action tracker and subsequently attend the first set of meetings if required.

She stated that once ward member training had finished, there would be other opportunities for members to get together to see how wards and their priorities linked into the district.

The Chairman concluded that it was all work in progress.

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### **BALSALL HEATH NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN – DECISION STATEMENT**

The following report of the Director of Planning and Regeneration was submitted:-

(See document No. 4)

Neil Vyse, Principal Development Planning Officer provided a background on how Neighbourhood Planning came into effect as part of the Localism Act in 2011. He detailed the difficulties in the adoption of a neighbourhood plan and expressed his appreciation for the patience and hard work that the Balsall Heath Neighbourhood Planning Forum had undertaken in putting together the plan, which he confirmed had been a learning process for everyone concerned.

He stated that they were now approaching the referendum stage and the election would be taking place on 8 October 2015. The referendum required a simple majority (51%) of those voting on the day. If the vote was in favour, the city council would be obliged to adopt the BHNDP and incorporate it into the Local Development Framework for the city.

Upon further consideration, it was:-

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**RESOLVED:-**

That the District Committee were aware of progress on the draft Plan, and that the date for the referendum had been set for 8 October 2015.

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**BIRMINGHAM DEVELOPMENT PLAN PROCESS**

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The following report of the Director of Planning and Regeneration of the Birmingham Development Plan: Inspector's Recommendations and Proposed Modifications was submitted:-

(See document No. 5)

Ian MacLeod, Development Planning Manager updated the Committee on the above-mentioned plan.

He provided a brief background of the plan and the stage of where it was at the moment with the inspector's main modifications. He referred to the public consultation that was now being undertaken due to the modifications and stated, that once the comments had been sent back for consideration, there would either be a re-examination, or the issuing of a report, which if this was the case, the plan could be adopted in early 2016.

He highlighted that whilst the main policies remained unchanged most were matters of detailed wording and that the city's housing requirements had increased. He stated that the inspector endorsed the city council working with neighbourhood authorities to meet the shortfall in housing and also supported the green belt releases in Sutton Coldfield.

A discussion ensued whereby concern was raised by members especially Councillor Evans relating to the withdrawal of the national policy code 6 and was therefore suggested, that the city council should reconsider the absence of code 6, and whether it could be added as a supplementary policy to the development plan, which was fully endorsed by the Chairman.

Ian MacLeod confirmed that members were entitled to make comments on the inspector's modifications which would be fed back for consideration. However with regard to the inspector's decision regarding code 6 of the national policy, he had taken into account representations from developers, who believed that the viability of code 6 would be difficult to achieve and in trying to achieve this, could affect the level of housing delivered into the city. He therefore, had made changes to the policy, which was now reflective of government policy whereby the target should be pushed back.

Following further comments from members regarding the decision, it was suggested that it should be questioned why it was rejected in terms of the detail, rather than the detail of why it had been excluded.

Ian MacLeod confirmed that the decision had come from the planning inspector and that ultimately a report would be produced, detailing why the changes had been made.

The Chairman concluded by stating that he fully supported Councillor Evans in that national policy 6 that it should remain in the plan.

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**PLACE DIRECTORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 1 2015/16**

The following report of the Service Director, Place Directorate was submitted:-

(See document No. 6)

Karen Cheney stated that due to the district committee's new remit, questioned whether members would like to see a report that reflected their new role in terms of what the committee had in influencing across all of the city council services, as well as the public services, which could include the Police and Public Health.

Following comments from members, it was agreed that the reporting was not fit for the committee's purpose and that it should be reviewed.

The Chairman concluded by referring to Councillor Trickett's response relating to the city's recycling target reducing, was due to physical and technical issues at the recycling points, and agreed that further detail would be provided outside of the meeting.

Upon further consideration, it was:-

186

**RESOLVED:-**

That the report be noted;

That the format of the report be reviewed in order to reflect the Committee's new purpose.

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**HOUSING TRANSFORMATION PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The following report of the Service Director, Housing Transformation was submitted:-

(See document No.7)

Natalie Potter, Senior service Manager presented the report and the narrative. She stated that it would be useful to have an understanding of the information members would like reported in the future.

In response to members' comments, Natalie Potter confirmed that they were looking at the allocations policy. She stated that outside the meeting she could provide information on the number of 4 bed properties that were in the area and how many had been allocated, adding that there were not enough properties to meet the current demand. With regard to repairs and response times, she stated that if there were any specific cases that were causing concern, she

would be happy to take back and progress, adding that a further point of contact to report specific issues would be the Place Manager covering that particular ward.

The Chairman stated that a simple guide on the allocations policy provided to members would be most helpful.

He concluded by stating that following the Cabinet meeting this morning, confirmed that the Montgomery Car Park and Auckland Road Car Park had finally been transferred to the Birmingham Housing Municipal Trust. He further concluded that within the Birmingham Development Plan, there were now over 500 new properties in Sparkbrook Ward, albeit very limited numbers in other areas of the district.

Upon further consideration, it was:

187 **RESOLVED:-**

That the report be noted;

That a simple guide to the allocations policy be provided to members.

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**RECEIPT OF PETITIONS (IF ANY)**

188 There were no petitions submitted to the meeting.

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**DATES OF FUTURUE MEETINGS**

189 The following schedule of meetings was noted:-

Tuesday 17 November at 1400 hours in Committee Rooms 3 & 4

Monday 18 January at 1000 hours in Committee Rooms 3 & 4

Tuesday 15 March at 1000 hours in Committee Rooms 3 & 4

The Chairman referred to the 2 meetings that had been changed due to the changes of the Cabinet meetings.

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**AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS**

190 **RESOLVED:-**

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 16:15 hours.

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CHAIRMAN