

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

12TH SEPTEMBER 2013

Report of: Paul Taylor, Head of Executive Office

Title: Update on the Status of the Mayoral Commissions

Ward: All

Officer Presenting Report: Paul Taylor, Head of Executive Office

Contact Telephone Number: 0117 3521195

RECOMMENDATION

To note the update regarding the status of the Mayoral Commissions.

Summary

The report details the emerging proposals in relation to the Mayoral Commissions, including the timetable and overarching objectives.

The Mayoral Commissions have been established to provide policy guidance in the following areas;

1. Education and Skills
2. Fairness
3. Homes
4. Sports

Full details of the objectives and purpose of each Commission can be found in appendices A to D.

The significant issues in the report are:

The role and remit of each Commission, details of which can be found in appendices A to D.

Policy

1. The Commissions are responsible for conducting a narrow and deep review of a specific area of policy in order to make recommendations to the Mayor. If the recommendations are accepted they will potentially affect future strategies.

Consultation

2. Internal

Not applicable at this stage.

3. External

Not applicable at this stage.

Context

4. In May 2013 the Mayor announced that he would be establishing four Commissions to review issues in the following areas;

Homes
Sports
Fairness
Education and Skills

5. Each Commission has a steering group of an elected Member and lead officers. Membership will include local and/or national experts and invitation letters have been issued. In addition to the standing membership of around ten external representatives there are likely to be evidence gathering sessions with expert witnesses.
6. The Commissions will be chaired by an independent person, but the lead elected member will have a significant role to play in guiding the recommendations to ensure they are;
 - Tangible and achievable without stifling innovation; and
 - Do not duplicate work previously explored or underway within the services/city/forums such as scrutiny; and
 - Contribute to the over-arching priorities of the Council
7. The draft Terms of Reference for each Commission have been developed in consultation with the Mayor, City Director and the steering group. The Terms of Reference will be ratified by each of the Commissions at their first meeting.

8. It is intended that each Commission has 4-5 monthly meetings, commencing in September 2013.
9. An interim update on the work of the Commissions will be provided by the Mayor during his annual address on 18th November 2013.
10. Meetings will not generally be open to the public to ensure that Commission Members are free to have innovative discussions, therefore allowing them to respond to their brief and undertake research in a variety of ways. However, non-exempt papers and the Terms of Reference will be available to the public via Bristol City Council's website.
11. Elected Members and members of the public will have the opportunity to scrutinise the recommendations arising from each Commission when the report to the Mayor is released in February/March 2014.
12. The Commissions will have access to a shared fund of £15K to cover the cost of research and Members' expenses.
13. There will be no 'new' Bristol City Council money available to support initiatives identified by the Commissions, but in some instances recommendations will be made for the allocation of existing resources or third party contributions.

Other Options Considered

14. None.

Risk Assessment

15. The risk assessments for each of the Commissions can be found in appendices A to D.

Public Sector Equality Duties

16. Before making a decision, section 149 Equality Act 2010 requires that each decision-maker considers the need to promote equality for persons with the following "protected characteristics": age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. Each decision-maker must, therefore, have due regard to the need to;
 - i) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act 2010.

- ii) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to :
 - remove or minimise disadvantage suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic;
 - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of people who do not share it (in relation to disabled people, this includes, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities);
 - encourage persons who share a protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

- iii) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to –
 - tackle prejudice; and
 - promote understanding.

Equalities Impact Assessment

17. A Full Equalities Impact Assessment will be conducted on each of the recommendations arising from the Commissions.

Legal and Resource Implications

18. Legal

‘The remit of each Commission referred to in this report is advisory and to make recommendations to the Mayor and others as identified. Should this change in due course further legal advice should be obtained.’

Advice provided by Penny Wilford, Team Leader (Corporate), Legal Services,

19. Financial

‘I note that a number of Mayoral Commissions are proposed. Whilst their remit is constrained to coordination of existing plans and actions, there should be no financial impact for the Council. Should any action yet not approved be proposed, then such action would need to be reviewed using the usual process in place for all key decisions so that any financial impact can be assessed.

It would be prudent if the actions, outputs and recommendations from

Mayoral Commissions were reviewed by Finance in case of financial consequences for the Council.'

Advice provided by Mike Allen, Finance Business Partner

20. Land

Not applicable

21. Personnel

Officer support is being provided by existing members of staff.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Summary report regarding the Education and Skills Commission

Appendix B - Summary report regarding the Fairness Commission

Appendix C - Summary report regarding the Homes Commission

Appendix D - Summary report regarding the Sports Commission

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
Background Papers:**

Education and Skills Commission

1. What is the Commission going to focus on?

The Education and Skills Commission will be responsible for strengthening the link between sustainable employment opportunities in our highly-skilled knowledge economy and the education and training Bristol's young people receive, identifying areas for improvement in the support we provide to young people. So as to have the greatest impact the Commission's work will include a 'deep-dive' into a specific area: how to most effectively support 14 – 25 year olds into jobs it is envisaged will become available in the Bristol Temple Quarter Enterprise Zone, and use the learning from this to shape practice and policy across and beyond Bristol. We intend to build on the strong work already being carried out in this area by the Local Enterprise Partnership and other partners, and expect to explore a number of areas including how to most effectively support entrepreneurship, and addressing the barriers faced by specific groups.

2. Who is on the Commission?

Cllr Alastair Watson is the internal lead on the Commission, and we are currently considering options for the Chairmanship. Invitations to prospective participants are being sent out.

3. What form/structure will the Commission take? What timetable is it working to?

We envisage a participatory process in which Commission members will receive evidence and develop solutions together. The Commission will meet four times in the period to January 2014, these being full day meetings.

4. What are the current issues/challenges?

A number of key risks have been identified and are being managed:

Risk	Risk management
A specific focus will mean the Commission is not seen as ambitious enough.	- Strategic focus needed consistently, backed up by clear communications. (- Commission remit has been discussed with key players, and developed in light of discussions.)
High level people that need to be involved do not engage.	- Ensured Commission's remit is highly relevant to organisations invited to participate, and its strategic

	<p>potential clear.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If necessary use contacts within BCC to encourage senior figures to get involved.
Key information is not available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scope out availability of information at an early stage, and plan how to manage any shortfalls.
Changes are 'watered down' during implementation, thereby decreasing the Commission's impact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure solutions are 'owned' by the Commission members. - Ensure the Commission considers implementation strategies to build a wide base of interest and support amongst organisations across Bristol / wider.
Commission's influence is restricted to Bristol.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seek national level membership. - Ensure effective communication strategy is in place.

Fairness Commission

1. What is the Commission going to focus on?

The objective of this commission will be challenge the Council to work with others across the city to take a step change that fundamentally changes the game on inequality in our city. Asking **‘What kind of city do we want to be?’** and proposing that **‘Bristol will be a city that works together to reduce inequalities through significant improvement in the life chances for its citizens.’**

It will seek to do this through raising awareness of unfairness that currently exists, building collective capacity and supporting opportunity. The outcomes from the commission will seek to:

- Recommend significant practical steps that can implemented quickly, alongside medium/longer term actions.
- Identify a series of fairness principles that can be applied across all council activity and be championed for greater adoption and support across the city.
- Make recommendations to Government where barriers exist to local implementation.

It is proposed that the commission will focus its work on the following activities although the Commission itself will review these at their first meeting and may make other suggestions based on their knowledge and expertise in order to achieve the commission aims and objectives.

- Building the evidence base and understanding the current challenges – the nature, extent, causes and impact of Bristol’s inequalities
- Reviewing good practice and the findings of other Fairness Commissions, and innovative ideas cities have adopted to challenge unfairness
- Making fairness everyone’s responsibility:
 - Build greater corporate and community awareness of and responsibility for fairness
 - Fairness at the heart of more integrated public services, not held back by organisational siloes
 - Considering how Bristol can move towards becoming a living wage city
 - Practical steps to support citizens to achieve more through improving access to services/facilities

2. Who is on the Commission?

The Mayor's ambition is to have a commission formed of national and local experts in the fields of inequalities, poverty and the wider determinants of health as well as calling upon expert witnesses where required. Invites are currently in progress and we hope to have an update on the final membership soon, including the Chairperson. Cabinet Members Councillors Geoffrey Gollop and Gus Hoyt are leading the Fairness Commission and been liaising with Officers in order to shape the invitation list and draft terms of reference.

3. What form/structure will the Commission take and what timetable is it working to?

As with the other Mayoral Commissions set out in this report it is proposed that this commission be 'task and finish' with a small number of focused meetings between mid/late September and January. The structure of meetings will depend on the activity taking place, but could include workshops to gather evidence and hear from other expert witnesses. Once the commission has concluded its work a report will be prepared and passed to the Mayor for his consideration.

It is proposed that the public will be kept up to date on the work of the commission at key stages and invited to input as appropriate. This could be through a webpage, but final arrangements are just being made.

4. What are the current issues/challenges?

The work of the core group so far (led by Cllrs Gollop and Hoyt) has helped to shape the current proposed terms of reference and taken account of Mayoral brief, local priorities, similar work undertaken elsewhere and timescale available. This has helped to work through any issues and challenges. Remaining issues as follows:

Risk	Mitigation
The issue of fairness is potentially very wide-ranging. Risk could be that the work of the Commission is too large to be achieved in the timescale available.	<p>Current terms of reference have been developed to take account of this risk. The Commission will consider draft TOR at their first meeting and will be advised where required.</p> <p>Commission will be supported to monitor work of other Bristol commissions where they map across similar areas – Education and Skills and Homes in particular to avoid duplication.</p> <p>Learning from other Fairness Commission work already completed will also assist the review of national factors.</p>

<p>The recent Scrutiny Living Wage recommendations (further actions) are not supported in full or part by the Fairness Commission</p>	<p>The report and recommendations from the Living Wage Scrutiny enquiry will be considered by the Fairness Commission at their first meeting as requested by OSM.</p> <p>The Commission may propose an alternative way for this research to continue than that already suggested, but taking into account the overall aims, objectives and other risks identified. OSM will be kept updated on progress.</p>
<p>Failing to attract appropriate membership due previous work undertaken through other Fairness Commissions.</p>	<p>Ensuring that national experts remain interested through establishing Bristol's unique position and perspective.</p> <p>Early indications for engagement are positive.</p>

Homes Commission

1. What is the Commission going to focus on?

The provision of sufficient homes to meet our housing need is a significant challenge in Bristol. Some of our key issues include:

- A waiting list of 14,000 for social housing (we have our own housing stock of 28,000).
- 5346 homes awaiting development on stalled sites across the cities.
- Only 60 affordable homes being built in 2013 when need exceeds 1000 a year.
- One of the highest affordability ratios in the country (9.0) in a city with some of the nation's most deprived wards.

The city is already in the final stages of producing an Affordable Housing Delivery Framework to introduce a step change in the production of affordable housing. To complement this work the Commission would like to concentrate on undertaking a 'deep-dive' into specific sites and examining:

1. Non-traditional and innovative models of housing funding (e.g. bonds, pension funds, community funding and use of our housing revenue account) to develop recommendations that will enable new units to be built.
2. Ways to influence traditional models of land ownership to lock in housing land use and prevent affordable homes being lost to the market.

This will produce outcomes in relation to these sites, but also policy recommendations for the city.

2. Who is on the Commission?

Our ambition is to have a Commission formed of national and local experts in the fields of housing, development and finance as well as calling upon expert witnesses where required. The Commission and its members will be supported by Bristol City Council officers and our internal lead will be Councillor Mark Bradshaw, the Assistant Mayor for Strategic Housing, Planning and Transport.

3. What form/structure will the Commission take and what timetable is it working to?

The ethos of the commission is that it will be a 'task and finish' group with only a small number of focused meetings and greater use of technology such

as Skype and sharing information electronically. We hope to host the first meeting in mid-late September 2013. This meeting will briefly confirm the terms of reference and then examine an evidence base of the issues on the sites and in the city. We shall meet the cost of expenses to attend all meetings.

4. What are the current issues/challenges?

A number of risks have been identified and will be managed as follows;

Risk	Risk Management
The recommendations of the Commission do not complement existing strategies, for example the Housing Delivery Plan or work underway at West of England level.	The steering group have considered this issue throughout the planning stages and have taken all necessary steps to ensure the work of the Commission fits with the overall plans for housing within the city.
Bristol City Council's role as a landlord could create a conflict of interest.	This is considered low risk due to the significant shortage of homes.
The Commission does not focus its efforts on the most appropriate sites.	Potential sites will be carefully researched.
Failure to attract high calibre experts to join the Commission.	Not applicable as we already have a number of housing experts who have agreed to join the Commission.

Sports Commission

1. What is the Commission going to focus on?

The key purpose of the Sports Commission will be;

- To advise the Mayor how he might seek to raise sporting aspirations in the City to the same level that secured Bristol the award of 'Green Capital of Europe 2015' and achieved its recognition as one of the UK's leading 'Creative and Cultural' cities.
- To take a strategic overview of the range of sporting services available in Bristol with the aim of raising participation across all ages and demographic groups.
- To help the City Council unlock an array of benefits in relation to; health and wellbeing, social cohesion, and sporting endeavour.

2. Who is on the Commission?

Various individuals have been invited to join the Commission including representatives from local grassroots sports organisations, young people and national sporting experts. We are seeking membership that reflects the diversity of Bristol.

The Chair will be appointed once we have finalised the membership, but we have identified a number of suitable candidates from our long list. Councillor Simon Cook, Assistant Mayor for Leisure, Tourism, Licensing and Community Safety is the lead elected Member on the Commission and has headed up the steering group of officers. He will continue to play a pivotal role by representing the Mayor at Commission meetings and shaping the outcomes/action plan.

3. What form/structure will the Commission take and what timetable is it working to?

The Commission has a 'task and finish' brief and work will take place over 4-5 monthly meetings, commencing in September 2013. At the end of the process the recommendations of the Commission will be referred to the Mayor for his approval.

4. What are the current issues/challenges?

The Sports Commission's mandate is to make a tangible difference to attitudes to physical activity in Bristol. Whilst this brief is aspirational, the steering group is confident that the goals of the Commission have been pitched at the appropriate level. During consideration of the Terms of

Reference a number of key risks have been identified and are being managed as follows;

Risk	Risk management
Failing to attract appropriate membership	This risk has passed since there is a good level of interest from national and local experts who wish to join the Commission.
Not meeting the targets set out within the terms of reference.	A robust action plan will be prepared by the Commission for approval by the Mayor to ensure the required outcomes are delivered. Responsibility for monitoring the progress of the action plan will be assigned to the relevant body/individual.
Being unsuccessful at attempts to lever in additional funding from partners to promote the sports and health agenda.	The Sports Commission has plans to seek investment from elsewhere, but Sport England funding of around £500K will shortly become available and the Sports Commission will make suggestions regarding its allocation.
Pitching the recommendations at the wrong level e.g. being too ambitious or not ambitious enough	We will agree short, medium and longer term goals to ensure momentum is maintained.