

**BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL
CABINET
5 AUGUST 2014**

**REPORT TITLE: 2013/14 MAYORAL COMMISSIONS' REPORTS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS**

Ward(s) affected by this report: ALL

Strategic Director: Education & Skills Commission, John Readman
Fairness Commission, Max Wide
Homes Commission, Barra Mac Ruairi
Sports Commission, Alison Comley

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Purpose of the report:

The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet with the Mayoral Commissions' reports and recommendations, Officers' initial comments and recommendations for action.

RECOMMENDATION for the Mayor's approval:

- 1. Recommend that Cabinet notes the reports and officers' initial comments (appendix 5).**
- 2. Request that Cabinet provides a steer on the Council's approach to the recommendations in response each of the Commissions' work, and captures any lessons learned from the process.**

The proposal:

1. Overview

- The Mayor set up four Commissions in 2013 to look into some of the key issues facing the city in the fields of Education & Skills, Fairness, Homes and Sports. The Commissions have now reported to the Mayor and the reports made available at: <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/page/mayor/mayoral-commissions>.
- The Mayor asked a range of independent experts to join the Commissions, in order to draw upon some of the expertise both within and beyond the city.
- This report in draft was received by Overview & Scrutiny on 10th July. Cabinet is asked to review the Commission reports alongside the report from scrutiny attached as Appendix ??.
- Note that any areas where Cabinet expresses an interest in pursuing further the

recommendations contain in the reports will be referred to relevant officers in relevant service areas to develop detailed proposals for further consideration by Cabinet.

Recommend:

- That Cabinet acknowledge and communicate the value gained by working in partnership with other organisations through the Commissions, and to thank partners for their work: the Commissions have provided some opportunities to develop deeper partnerships, and have contributed to ensuring that the city makes good use of its shared assets to the benefit of Bristol.
- Where there are recommendations Cabinet would like to see receive further consideration, Cabinet are advised to consider how Overview & Scrutiny might be invited to conduct further in-depth work to advise on their implementation.

2. Commission reports

Please note the Commissions' reports and recommendations can be found in full in Appendices 1 – 4. The following offers short summaries of their work. Appendix 5 offers Council officer comments on the proposals, and appendix ?? provides comment from Overview & Scrutiny.

EDUCATION & SKILLS COMMISSION

Report summary

Background

- Commission focused on how to maximise the employability of young people in Bristol and enable business to engage with young people, with a specific focus on Temple Quarter Enterprise Zone (TQEZ).
- It met five times between Oct 2013 and Mar 2014, with additional work taking place in sub-groups. Primary and secondary research included 270 responses from young people to an online survey (in two weeks), four focus groups, and schools visiting the Commission.
- 13 key partners from within and beyond Bristol engaged, also with Councillor involvement.

Findings

The Commission's two main recommendations (listed below) should be seen as possible solutions to the various issues identified. If these are not viable, then other solutions should be identified.

Recommendation 1: The Mayor develops a Passport for Employability in Bristol (PEBL) to provide all young people in Bristol with a baseline of 'entitlements' and opportunities to develop employability and enterprise skills and access effective Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG), as is in line with their needs and aspirations. Thereby decreasing the differences in young people's experiences resulting from the nature of the education provision they currently receive, and regardless of their access to effective support should they not be in education or training. A 'pilot' of PEBL is recommended to ensure timely development of the initiative. PEBL should be developed alongside the LEP's Employability Chartermark.

Recommendation 2: The Mayor leads partners in the city to develop an 'Engagement Hub' in the TQEZ, to address the key issues that the city faces in this area. The purpose of the Engagement Hub is to enable businesses, education providers and young people to come together for initiatives/activities aimed at raising aspirations, promoting employability and enterprise, and facilitating and enhancing the provision of IAG and employability and enterprise. The Mayor should work with partners to create similar spaces beyond the TQEZ.

Key issues and assumptions

- The Commission looked at the type of young person needed by business now and in 5/10 years' time. This led to a number of original approaches including eg:
 - 'fields of work' (young people encouraged to focus on an area rather than a specific job)
 - STEAM (integrating the Arts with STEM subjects) due to employers' emerging needs
 - overcoming the 'false' academic / vocational divide
- The Commission considered it important that the Mayor incentivise all partners to engage, noting this would not necessarily be about money; and for the Mayor to encourage partners, including young people, in the city to engage and to ensure Bristol City Council (BCC) consider joint accountability and responsibility, involving all partners in developing solutions.
- The recommendations should be considered alongside the work already happening in Bristol: much could be achieved by linking existing initiatives into a coordinated system.
- The Commission looked at implementation and viability, and understood there would need to be some pump-priming funding. It was considered viable to approach corporates for this.

Issues not addressed by the Commission

- There was a limit to how much the Commission could address during its lifespan.
- Its remit did not include looking at the issues for those younger than 14, but engaging this group in IAG and so on was seen as important, as many dispositions are formed earlier than 14.
- The Commission considered that more consultation was needed in some areas, and highlighted that it had not looked at the needs of specific disadvantaged groups deeply enough.
- The Commission thought the local authority boundaries around Bristol might provide additional challenges, and would need further consideration by BCC.

FAIRNESS COMMISSION

Report summary

The Fairness Commission was invited to make recommendations that challenges the Council to fundamentally change the game on inequality in the City by asking 'What kind of City do we want to be?' and make a commitment to: 'Be a City that works together to reduce inequalities through significant improvement in the life chances for its citizens.'

The Commission met six times between October 2013 and March 2014 developed recommendations around five main themes (as below) plus developed a series of Fairness Principles.

- The best place for children to grow up - a fair start in life
- Sharing prosperity - a fair place to live and work
- Fair Wages – a living wage for all
- Fairness for low-income families
- A happy, healthy city - fair and healthy communities

The overarching ambitions for each section are set out below, but the Commission report contains recommendations under each of these themes.

Ambition one - Bristol is a young city and it should aim to be the best place for children to grow up. What happens during pregnancy and during a child's first few years of life is crucial to a child's life chances. The Commission feels strongly that the City can't afford not to invest in children. Bristol should brand itself as a young city with youthful ambition – with no child in Bristol left behind.

Ambition two - Bristol is a wealthy city, with strong economic growth, vitality and enterprise. For

those people and families who have suffered the most from the effects of recession and austerity, it is crucial now that they should be the first to share in the proceeds of growth through prioritisation of funds. For working families with children, life has become increasingly tough, and Bristol should aim to share their load to become the most family friendly city in the country. A second ambition for Bristol, then, is around sharing prosperity – making Bristol the best place to live and work.

Ambition three - The Commission supports the Council's commitment to become a living wage employer and firmly believes that it has to lead by example if it is to expect others to adopt it too. No-one in Bristol should do a hard day's work for less than they can afford to live on. Bristol should aim to become a leading living wage city.

Ambition four - The poorest people have taken the biggest hit as key in-work and out-of-work benefits have been cut, particularly women, disabled people and families with young children. The impact is visible in Bristol with, amongst other things, the growth of food banks. Bristol needs to take action to help them.

Ambition five – Continue to listen to and learn from Bristol's vibrant yet disadvantaged communities, so badly hit by austerity. Invest in them and their local infrastructure. Make Bristol a happy, healthy city.

Moving forward - adopting Fairness Principles

As Fairness is a cross cutting issue, both within the Council, its partners and across the city the Commission recommends the establishment of a Fairness Alliance to continue to work together across the City

- To share good practice, adopt a set of Fairness principles and seek to work together to resolve issues.
- To promote and encourage greater corporate social responsibility, making local citizens and organisations aware that inequality damages us all, seeking to dispel myths about the causes of poverty and inviting local action through measures including sponsorship and active volunteering.

HOMES COMMISSION

Report summary

The provision of housing, particularly affordable housing, is one of the most challenging issues for Bristol and as such has been designated as a top priority for Mayor Ferguson. The Homes Commission has sought to tackle this complex issue by bringing together experts, both local and national, to produce specific policy recommendations that will meet the city's housing needs.

The Commission recommends that the ten following recommendations (which are not in priority order and do not constitute all of the Commission's recommendations) will, when implemented, make the biggest difference to delivering More Homes Faster Homes

- Measures to increase the supply of developable land for new homes including in particular bringing forward sites in Council ownership following a Council wide review of land and property assets
- An enhanced and proactive role for the Bristol Property Board in bringing forward sites for the development of new homes
- A Revolving Investment Fund set up by the Council to promote and support the development of sites for new homes where short-term finance represents an obstacle to development

- More active use of Compulsory Purchase Order powers by the Council to encourage and release stalled sites and sites with complex ownership problems
- A dedicated 'stalled sites' team set up by the Council to address problems of bringing forwards specific sites and to focus on securing positive and timely outcomes
- Alternative models of new homes provision including custom build, self-build and market-rent provision to be actively supported by the Council and the Homes & Communities Agency
- The West of England Strategic Housing Market Assessment to explicitly model the need for, and likely supply of, affordable homes and the implications of the future balance of housing supply and demand for house-prices, rents and housing affordability
- Once the Strategic Housing Market Assessment is complete the Council brings forward and carries out a review of its Core Strategy and all four West of England authorities collaborate to review all Core Strategies working to a common set of policy goals to address the sub regional challenges of housing and infrastructure provision
- Council leadership to foster a clear, consistent and entrepreneurial culture that is results not process driven, that focuses on achieving measurable new homes supply outcomes and is supported by smarter, more effective systems and processes including end to end programme management for housing delivery
- Best use to be made of the Council's retained housing and owned land to support the development of new homes through measures including proactive asset management of existing council housing and identifying whether there is a portfolio of council housing that, through the mechanism of a stock transfer, has the potential to unlock access to additional private finance borrowing capacity

SPORTS COMMISSION

Report summary

Background

- The Commission was established in October 2013 and held four meetings, concluding in December 2013.
- The specific purpose of the Commission was;
 - 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 demographic groups by;
 - o Conducting a review of the facilities that are available across the Bristol region and establishing how to unlock them.
 - o Confirming a strategy for securing and utilising investment from third parties, to improve facilities.
 - o Considering the improvements required to prevent transport being a barrier to physical activities.
 - o Reviewing the benefits of holding more major sporting events in the city and agreeing how to maximise future opportunities.
 - o Discussing the options for building closer working relationships with the community and professional sports clubs.

- Taking an indepth look at the strategic oversight of sport facilities and activities in Bristol, and the wider area, to consider recommendations for improvements.
- Bristol City Council's Bristol: Sport for Life Strategy was approved by the Cabinet in 2013 and included the recommendation that a Sports Partnership be set up to oversee provision in Bristol and beyond. It was agreed that the outcomes of the Commission should align with the priorities set out within the Strategy and specifically that the Commission would make recommendations regarding the implementation of the Sports Partnership.

Findings

The Commission makes the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1 - Sports Partnership

That key partners should move quickly to establish a new Bristol sports partnership body that has the mandate, independence, resources and responsibility to better enable organisations and communities to achieve their own goals and deliver the aims of Bristol:Sport4life.

That this partnership body should have an independent chair and be incorporated as a Community Interest Company (CIC), with a membership that is drawn from a diverse range of organisations, communities and individuals who have the most to bring to growing sport participation across the city

Recommendation 2 - 2014 Priorities - Facilities, Participation and Events

That there are ten immediate and pressing priorities for 2014:

- A - bring work on the Sports Facilities and Playing Pitches strategies to a conclusion;
- B - seek opportunities and agreement with sports facilities owners and operators, including schools, to unlock facilities for extended community use;
- C - support/extend existing School Games programme, with a focus on increasing the number of inter-school sports competitions across Bristol;
- D - bid to host 2019 Cricket World Cup games in Bristol;
- E - secure commitment from at least one other sports governing body to bring major sports events to Bristol;
- F - prepare and complete Bristol sports events strategy;
- G - establish Bristol sports partnership body as above (incl. terms of reference, legal form, membership/composition, action plan, budget & resources, appoint staff);
- H - ensure that sports development and facility projects meet funding partner criteria (e.g. Sport England, national governing bodies, commercial and charitable partners, developer contributions); and
- I - promote Bristol women's and girls' sport and participation; and
- J - celebrate sporting achievement in Bristol in 2014.

Issues Not Considered

The Commission identified the following additional issues, but did not have the sufficient time to examine them in enough detail to make firm recommendations:

- Elite sport;
- Sport pathways (talent identification and development);
- Ability sport;
- Coaching and performance;
- Sports science & medicine; and
- Sports administration

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Education & Skills Commission report

Appendix 2 – Fairness Commission report

Appendix 3 – Homes Commission report

Appendix 4 – Bristol Sports Commission report

Appendix 5 – Council officer comments on Commission reports

Appendix 5 – Report from Overview & Scrutiny, 10th July (to be added)

Access to information (background papers):

<http://www.bristol.gov.uk/page/mayor/mayoral-commissions>

**MAYOR OF BRISTOL'S
EDUCATION & SKILLS COMMISSION**

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

APRIL 2014

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- D. Vacancies / skills data
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Foreword

Last year I announced the establishment of a number of Mayoral Commissions in Bristol to look at key policy areas. Since this announcement we have set up a number of these Commissions, each one representing key priorities for the city, and specifically areas where we must do more to break down the barriers that risk holding us back from achieving our true potential. I noted that a thriving education and skills system is vital to our growing city, and that we need to do more to ensure that the opportunities created in key sectors of the economy are open to Bristol's young people.

I asked Council officers to assemble a cast-list of some of the most knowledgeable and gifted individuals who could help advise us on each of these areas, and was delighted to see the calibre of the people who were willing to give up their time and contribute so freely to the debate. Bristol owes them a huge debt of gratitude.

I will now review the findings of the Commissions and consider them as part of the Council's policy making process. I have asked officers in the Council to review the recommendations and advise on how we might implement them, giving due regard to financial, legal and other considerations. I will also ask the Council's Overview & Scrutiny function to advise my Cabinet and me on the recommendations, following the local election and start of the new civic year in June. This draws in the perspectives of a wider cohort of Councillors representing all parts of the city – which is an opportunity to add further richness to the proposals coming forward.

Finally I would like to use this opportunity to thank each member of the Education & Skills Commission, Professor Ron Ritchie as Chair and Emily Kippax as key officer, for their substantial contributions. I am confident this work leaves the city better prepared for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.



George Ferguson
Mayor of Bristol

Executive Summary

The Mayor of Bristol called for an Education & Skills Commission in order to, *'strengthen the link between sustainable employment opportunities in our highly-skilled, knowledge economy, and the education and training our young people receive, whether at school, college or university'*. The Commission focused on how to maximise the employability of young people in Bristol, including removing barriers, so they can secure the jobs created in Bristol's Temple Quarter Enterprise Zone (TQEZ), in Bristol and beyond; also examining how to enable business, particularly those based in the TQEZ, to engage with young people.

The Education & Skills Commission, chaired by Professor Ron Ritchie, met five times between October 2013 and March 2014, examining a wide range of areas, from students' progression data and best practice in Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG), through to hearing directly from young people. The Commission consisted of partners from a wide range of organisations, including educational providers, business, the voluntary sector and public sector: membership can be found at Appendix A. The Commission's recommendations are underlined and numbered in this Summary, and listed in full at Appendix B.

By means of focus groups, the Commission has undertaken some initial consultation with a wider range of stakeholders including some young people, and has gained greatly from these additional perspectives. The recommendations would however still benefit greatly from being shared with a broader cross-section of stakeholders, and in particular would benefit from the greater involvement of and consultation with larger businesses within and beyond the TQEZ, and young people [3.1]. As co-producers of their futures, it will be essential for the Mayor to consider the views of the latter group and learn what they need from him, as well as learning what they will want to engage with and help make a success.

Due to the timescales the Commission was asked to deliver in, it needed to take a specific approach to a number of areas. This included focusing primarily on young people that are currently in education or training and, having taken the view that young people's unemployment is a mainstream issue, focusing on challenges faced by all young people rather than specifically focusing on groups that face additional challenges, albeit that a central informing principle of the Commission's recommendations has been an interest in 'levelling the playing field' wherever possible. As such, the Commission strongly recommends that the Mayor carries out further research into the specific barriers to employment, enterprise and social enterprise for young people from disadvantaged groups and how their barriers to employment can be overcome, including those from specific communities and ethnic minorities, those not in education, employment or training, those with learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities, and those facing mental health issues [3.2].

The Commission's deliberations, analysis of data and expert contributions have led to the conclusion that the majority of its recommendations should focus on two main themes:

- Enhancing the IAG available to young people in Bristol alongside increasing the opportunities for them to develop employability and enterprise skills, knowledge, understanding and attitudes.

- Promoting and supporting effective partnership working and collaboration between businesses, education and training providers and young people.

The Commission recognised there are statutory requirements of schools with regard to IAG, that Ofsted covers this in its inspection framework to some degree, that there is a national careers service and that there are examples of excellent practice in Bristol settings. However, it concluded that locally IAG is somewhat fragmented, of variable quality, with neither the needs of young people nor employers being fully met: a finding in line with several key national reports¹. The Commission concluded that IAG should be seen as inextricably linked to the development of employability and enterprise skills (also very variable in Bristol schools) and to raising young people's aspirations, and that together these dimensions are part of an ongoing process that helps prepare young people for the complexity and challenges of adult life and the world of work they will encounter.

In addressing these two main themes, the Commission proposes two 'big ideas' that offer tools for potentially improving the current situation. The first is a **Passport to Employability in Bristol** (PEBL) (working title) for young people to provide entitlements and enhance opportunities for them as they prepare for adult life. The second is to create a virtual and physical **Engagement Hub for Employability and Enterprise**, based in the TQEZ, to promote and support enhanced partnership working between young people, businesses, education providers and other related organisations. PEBL and the Engagement Hub provide the suggested means for implementing the recommendations. The recommendations could however be implemented by alternative means. As such the detail and rationale behind PEBL and the Engagement Hub should be understood.

As the figures on pages 7 and 9 indicate, both PEBL and the Engagement Hub provide a practical methodology by which to implement a number of the Commission's recommendations, which are themselves informed by the Commission's recognition of the following:

- The importance of young people's voices being heard and valued so their needs, especially where barriers to employment exist, are understood and addressed.
- The need for more joined up approaches between different education and training providers and businesses (especially SMEs) that are based on mutual respect, reciprocity and fruitfulness for all involved.
- The need for IAG is informed by and matched to the needs of the fast-changing world of work, enterprise and social enterprise, for example through promoting understanding of 'fields' of employment as opposed to information about specific jobs.
- The value of enhancing and broadening curricula to ensure high quality IAG and employability and enterprise and more closely aligning academic and vocational aspects.
- The need for IAG / employability and enterprise to be an ongoing process for young people (that begins before 14) and continues after they have left formal education settings.
- The need for further engagement of communities and families to enhance understanding of the changing world of work and the nature of employment opportunities in the 21st century.
- The local benefits of identifying and sharing examples of best practice where evidence of impact is strong, to support further roll out of best practice across the city and beyond.

¹ Ofsted (2013) *Going in the Right Direction?*; Anderson (2014) *Making Education Work*, Pearson Education Ltd

- The need to incentivise businesses to be more active in IAG and the development of young people's employability and enterprise skills.

The Commission recognises that schools, in particular, but not exclusively, have to ensure their focus on improvement and increasing student attainment remains a priority. The Commission's recommendations need to be implemented in that context and developed as complementary to and supportive of schools' improvement journeys.

Passport for Employability in Bristol (PEBL)

The Commission recommends the development of a 'Passport for Employability in Bristol' (PEBL) to provide all young people in Bristol with a baseline of 'entitlements' and opportunities to develop employability and enterprise skills, and access effective IAG, as is in line with their needs and aspirations. Thereby decreasing the differences in young people's experiences resulting from the nature of the education provision they currently receive, and regardless of their access to effective support should they not be in education or training [1]. The Commission has carried out some initial research with young people around this idea and received very positive feedback, albeit with important points to help implementation succeed. The range of areas it is suggested that PEBL covers, and other key considerations, can be found in Figure 1.

The Commission considers that the PEBL has great potential for corporate sponsorship and has considered key implementation issues in its discussions, which will be made available to the Mayor. The Commission strongly recommends that the Mayor develops this tool in partnership with other stakeholders around the city and particularly focuses on engaging those institutions which might not otherwise engage. PEBL has the potential to be highly complex, particularly around online security, and the Commission recommends that the initiative is piloted [1] in school(s), to assist with data protection issues and ensure timely development of the initiative. Full development of PEBL should enable the Mayor to effectively implement recommendations 1.1 to 1.3 inclusive as outlined below, across Bristol.

The Commission recommends that PEBL is developed alongside the LEP's Employability Chartermark [1], encouraging schools, further education (FE) and higher education (HE) providers to sign up to the PEBL, while supporting the LEP to promote the Employability Chartermark initiative and ensure ongoing robust evaluation of its impact and explore its complementarity to PEBL. Stakeholders engaged enthusiastically with the PEBL concept and aims.

Implementation of PEBL has the potential to successfully address a number of the Commission's recommendations including:

- Education providers should improve IAG for all young people in education (including those under the age of 14), and increase their opportunities to further develop employability, enterprise and social enterprise dispositions, skills, knowledge and experience [1.1]:
 - Help young people access meaningful work experience opportunities. [1.1.1]
 - Engage directly with young people's families and communities. [1.1.2]
 - Encourage young people to recognise and value different routes into employability and enterprise, including, for example, vocational routes. [1.1.3]

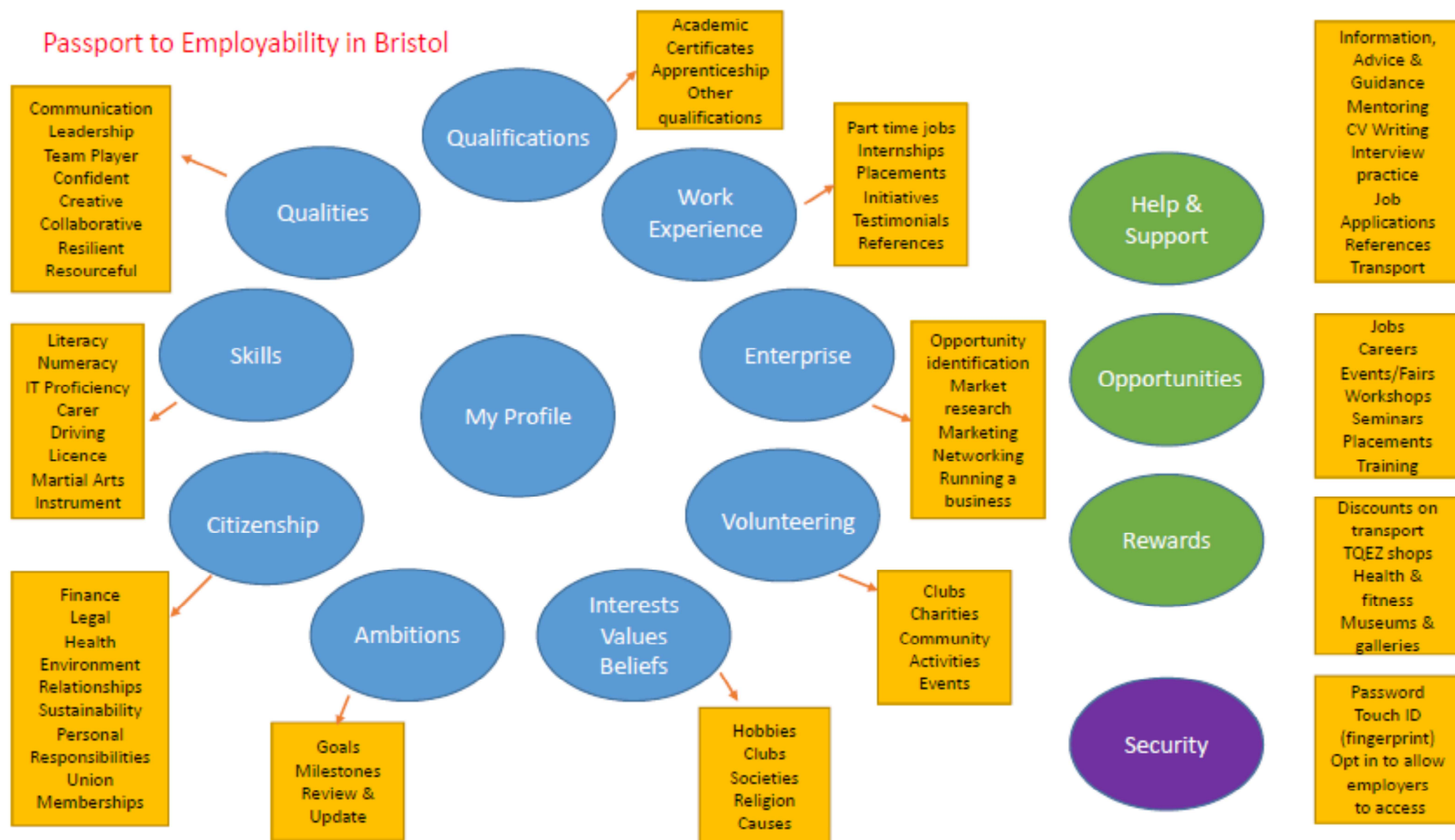
- Encourage FE and HE providers to work in partnership with regard to employability and enterprise/IAG to maximise benefits, and avoid duplication and mixed messages. [1.1.4]
- Consider focusing more on career opportunities rather than subject choice as an end in itself. [1.1.5]
- Consider how to improve young people's perception of STEM subjects. [1.1.6]
- Promote the concept of 'fields of work' rather than specific roles/jobs. [1.1.7]
- Consider adapting the curriculum to develop young people's employability and enterprise skills. [1.1.8]
- Education providers should improve IAG for those who have left formal full-time education [1.2]:
 - Collect data regarding student progression (which would also enable providers to modify their offering to ensure it is fit for purpose). [1.2.1]
 - Support former students with IAG for up to three years, in order to help young people into 'sustainable careers'. [1.2.2]
 - Consider developing an alumni system where successful young people inform and engage with the subsequent cohort. [1.2.3]
- Young people should be involved as active participants in their futures and given additional opportunities for development [1.3]:
 - Further enhance the support and provision designed to raise young people's aspirations with regard to their future and, particularly, employability. This should begin before the age of 14. [1.3.1]
 - Young people are involved in the governance of the TQEZ, engagement hub and other engagement spaces developed around Bristol [1.3.2], to ensure young people's voices are heard, to raise young people's awareness of opportunities in the TQEZ, and to promote positive role models.
 - Test out innovative and/or young people led initiatives to support progression into and in employment. [1.3.3]

PEBL offers a comprehensive framework for implementing all the above recommendations. It is suggested that the Mayor look at the EU's 'Youth Guarantee' as a model for ensuring young people are provided with opportunities for development.

Beyond PEBL, the Commission recommends that the Mayor:

- Works with Ofsted to explore how they can strengthen the inspection element that focuses on how well prepared young people are for the world of work, by (1) improving the quality of the questions asked, (2) increasing the profile and significance of this element to overall assessments, and (3) promoting this aspect to the media and other stakeholders [1.4].
- Investigates mechanisms to demonstrate the value of further integrating Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths with Arts (STEAM) subjects, in response to the needs of the emerging economy. [1.5]
- Ensures that the real costs of different routes to employment are made transparent to young people. [1.6]

Figure 1



TQEZ Engagement Hub and joined-up system

The Commission's research suggests that while much strong and effective work is going on in Bristol in this area, it is not necessarily being done in partnership or with the knowledge of all partners. This is leading to duplication and means the most is not being made of initiatives.

The Commission recommends that Bristol organisations work more closely with each other, including surrounding authorities, to ensure more effective approaches to work related to employability and enterprise/IAG across the greater Bristol region. This should include referring young people to other providers as appropriate, and sharing knowledge and intelligence about social and cultural practices and the specific challenges faced by some young people, which impact either negatively or positively on young peoples' progression into employment [2.1]. The Commission has noted that it will be important for the Mayor to better understand how well the system is working for young people at and between three notable stages of 14-16, 16-19 and 19+, and ensure that funding is aligned to effectively support work and changes that are needed.

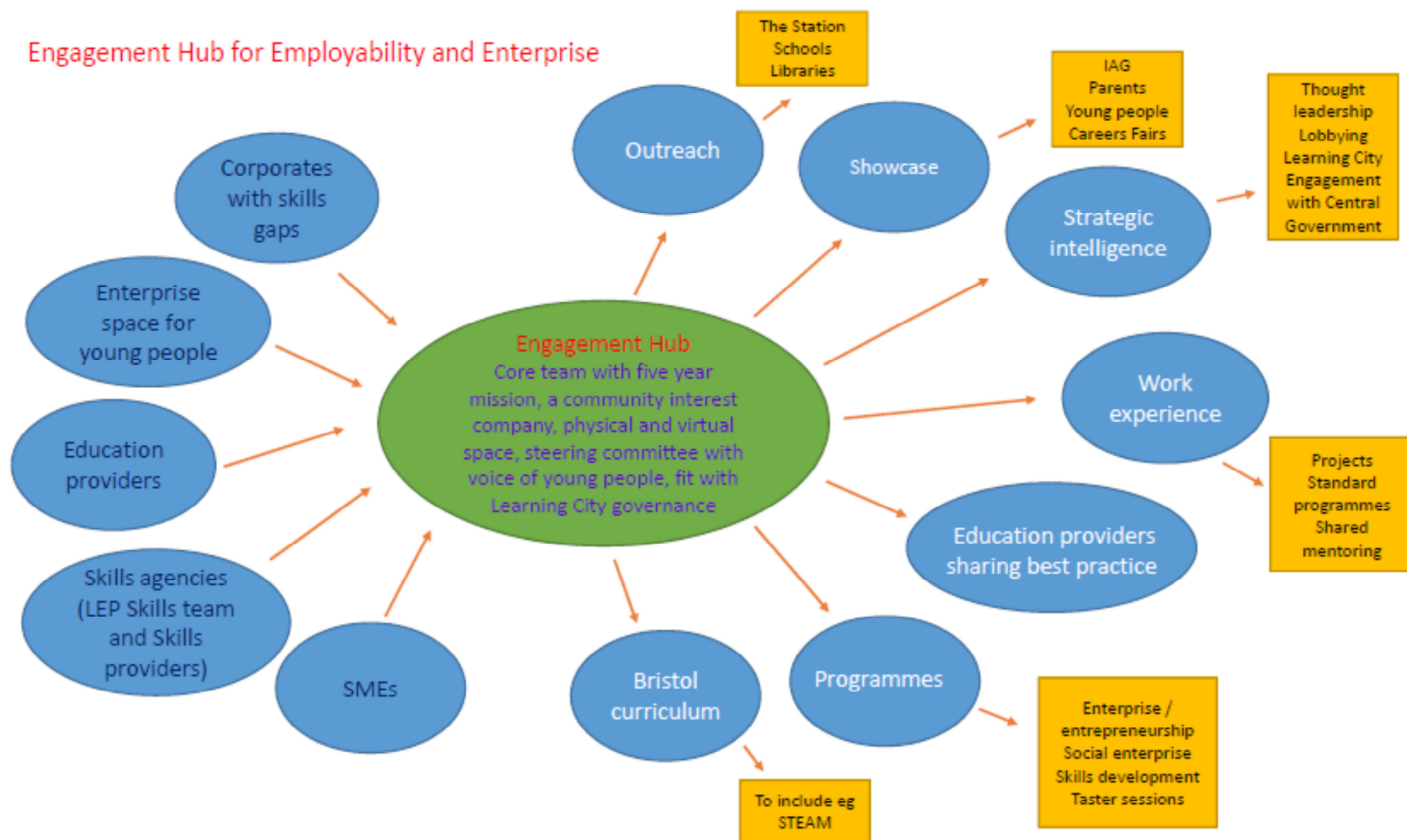
The Commission recommends that the Mayor lead partners to develop an 'Engagement Hub' in the TQEZ, to address the key issues that the city faces in this area. The purpose of the Engagement Hub is to enable businesses, education providers and young people to come together for initiatives/activities aimed at raising aspirations, promoting employability and enterprise, and facilitating and enhancing the provision of IAG and employability and enterprise [2], linking this to the Mayor's Learning City concept. Figure 2 provides further detail on the possible inputs, outputs and benefits the Engagement Hub has been designed to realise.

It is envisaged an initial pilot in the TQEZ will facilitate the development of better joined-up working across and beyond the city. It will be important to ensure the Engagement Hub links to and complements similar spaces (eg the Station), and will need to be complemented by a Bristol-wide perspective, if not a West of England perspective. In addition to piloting such a space in the TQEZ, it is recommended that the Mayor works with partners to create similar spaces beyond the TQEZ [2], while considering how to encourage key stakeholder groups to engage. Stakeholders provided further ideas for the Engagement Hub which will be made available to the Mayor.

The Commission has a number of recommendations for the broader agenda of joining up partners work across Bristol, which could however form part of the Engagement Hub's work:

- Ensure that skills development is connected to the area's employers' current and future requirements. [2.1.1]
- Support young people with meaningful work experience opportunities. [2.1.2]
- Encourage stakeholders to monitor and evaluate their work and share this information with partners, to develop a better understanding of impact and to share learning [2.1.3].
- Research and make available good practice examples of Bristol initiatives promoting employability and enterprise, and raising young people's aspirations. [2.1.4]
- Develop and maintain an accessible calendar of events for Bristol. [2.1.5]
- Develop a scheme / work with partners to build on existing schemes to enable SMEs to link to a specific school, community or VCS organisation, ensuring that underperforming schools (etcetera) are not excluded. [2.1.6]

Figure 2



The Commission considers that the success of the Engagement Hub will provide a strong platform upon which to negotiate policy changes with Government. In the interim it recommends that the following policy change be put forward and advocated for.

- The three Government departments responsible for the transition from school to work (Dept for Education, Dept for Work & Pensions, and the Dept for Business, Innovation & Skills) should ensure their policies are aligned and work better than they do at present to help all young people make the transition into work successfully. This should include considering changes to the national curriculum and improved guidance for schools in the area of IAG, to include employability and enterprise skills, and take account of the skill needs of the new economy. Having improved the system, Government should make no further institutional changes for some years so that the reformed system has the opportunity to 'bed down' and be made to work. [2.3]

There are specific challenges that businesses, and in particular Small to Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) and micro-enterprises, will face in order to contribute to this agenda. Bristol City Council's analysis suggests that SMEs will be of particular significance to the TQEZ due to their anticipated growth in the four key sectors, while stakeholders have suggested that SMEs tend to provide more supportive environments for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and as such that enabling SMEs to engage will be key. Having concluded that their engagement is key for effective IAG, and young people developing employability and enterprise skills, the Commission recommends that business, and recognising the specific barriers they face, SMEs particularly should be helped and encouraged to support young people and to engage with the Engagement Hub [2.2]:

- Explore the levers to provide tax and rates incentives to business in the TQEZ in return for engaging young people, focusing on the four key sectors as a pilot for this. [2.2.1]
- Employers should communicate the career pathways and their emerging needs related to employees for the foreseeable future, especially in the context of the TQEZ. [2.2.2]
- Develop a 'brokerage service' which enables SME employers to write a brief for the type of person they would like to employ, with the service then mediating between individual and the employer to ensure that young people maximise their chances of employment, in a market where open recruitment does not take place routinely. [2.2.3]
- SME employers should recognise and share with other SME employers the benefits of working with educational providers and young people to raise their aspirations and enhance their employability and enterprise skills, and develop case studies. [2.2.4]
- Different routes into employment and enterprise should be regarded of equal value, and described as such by employers, and individuals from lower income backgrounds should not be excluded from vocational and/or other routes to employment. [2.2.5]

1. Introduction

1.1 The Mayor of Bristol's Education & Skills Commission met five times between October 2013 and March 2014. It consisted of members from a wide range of organisations, including educational providers, businesses, the voluntary and public sector sectors, recognising the importance of bringing these stakeholders together to understand their perspectives, strengths and challenges. Professor Ron Ritchie, from the University of the West of England (UWE), was appointed as the independent chair by the Mayor. The Commission's membership can be found at Appendix A.

1.2 The Commission examined a wide range of areas, from students' progression data and best practice in Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG), through to hearing directly from young people through four focus groups and running an online survey which attracted 270 responses in 17 days.

1.3 The Commission presents the Mayor with two recommendations which outline solutions to a larger number of sub-recommendations, which could however be actioned via alternative means. The 'headline solutions' therefore should not be taken in isolation, but instead the rationale behind them understood. The recommendations can be found in full at Appendix B.

1.4 In March 2014 the Commission undertook some initial consultation on its draft findings by means of focus groups, and has gained greatly from these additional perspectives. The recommendations would however still benefit greatly from being shared with a broader cross-section of stakeholders, and in particular would benefit from the greater involvement of and consultation with larger businesses within and beyond the TQEZ, and more young people. As co-producers of their futures, it will be essential for the Mayor to consider the views of the latter group and learn what they need from him, as well as what they will engage with and contribute to making a success. This is captured in recommendation 3.1 as outlined in Appendix B.

1.5 Due to the timescales the Commission was asked to deliver in, it needed to take a specific approach to a number of areas. This includes having focused primarily on young people that are in education or training and, having taken the view that young people's unemployment is a mainstream issue, that it would focus on challenges faced by all young people rather than specifically focusing on groups that face additional challenges, albeit that a central informing principle of the Commission's recommendations has been an interest in 'levelling the playing field' wherever possible. As such, the Commission strongly recommends that the Mayor carry out further research into the specific barriers to employment, enterprise and social enterprise for young people from disadvantaged groups and how their barriers to employment can be overcome, including those from specific communities and ethnic minorities, those not in education, employment or training, those with learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities, and those facing mental health issues. This is captured in recommendation 3.2 as outlined in Appendix B.

1.6 The following sections provide an outline of the research which has most centrally informed the development of the Commission's understanding of the key issues and recommendations.

2.1 Bristol schools' outcomes and improvements

2.1.1 Bristol schools have made progress over the last few years and there are positive signs of this in the 'Ofsted Annual Report 2012/13, South West region'² which reports that Bristol had the greatest increase in the proportion of good or outstanding primary schools in 2012/13 and Bristol secondary schools improved their position in the league table to 84th out of 152, with 73% of its schools rated good or outstanding.

2.1.2 GCSE results (5 A* - C grade GCSEs including English and Maths) in Bristol schools have improved by 22% since 2006 and are now at 52%. This is still below the national average and although the gap has been closed, progress has slowed and improvement needs to accelerate. Within the city's results are some schools which have made outstanding progress recently and others that urgently need improvement. There is a complexity about outcomes in Bristol which gets lost in the overall headlines. The Commission notes that schools (head teachers and governors/Trusts etc) and Local Authority officers are focused on improvement in these schools driven, in part, by the action plan that resulted from Ofsted's last inspection of Bristol.

2.1.3 The Commission has been concerned to ensure that any recommendations made do not distract schools and officers from their focus on school improvement against the criteria determined by central government, the Department for Education and Ofsted, instead that they demonstrate how action, such as for example promoting business links with schools, can be congruent with schools' improvement journeys and add value to those.

2.1.4 Stakeholders also need to recognise that GCSE outcomes are not the whole story and the aims of the Commission will only be fully met when young people are supported in developing dispositions, skills, knowledge and attitudes that support their future employment and enterprise. This outlook has informed the development of many of the recommendations.

2.1.5 The focus in much of the discourse around Bristol school results and outcomes is on the state-maintained sector and at times it is appropriate that the story of Bristol education should include the performance of the independent sector.

2.2 Progression of young people in Bristol to further and higher education, training and/or employment

2.2.1 The Commission notes the success of Bristol's two universities in terms of the progression of their graduates to employment or further training (95% at the University of the West of England (UWE) and 96% at the University of Bristol (UoB)). 40% of UWE graduates remain in Bristol, 21% of UoB graduates. The proportion of graduates choosing to stay in Bristol is encouraging and indicates the potential for filling appropriate TQEZ jobs with local graduates, although the match between employer needs and graduate subjects / skills is an ongoing challenge. Clearly other local higher education institutions (HEIs) (in particular Bath, Bath Spa and Gloucestershire universities) also contribute to the Bristol jobs market. The Commission also notes increasing numbers of graduates

² <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/ofsted-annual-report-201213-south-west-region>

(usually from foundation degrees) are being educated at further education (FE) colleges, for example Bristol, Weston and Stroud and South Gloucestershire colleges. It also notes City of Bristol College (CoBC) was Access Provider to HE of the Year in 2013.

2.2.2 The Commission notes the positive progression data available from CoBC (see Appendix C) and the improvement journey the College has been on since its last Ofsted inspection in February 2013³. The College is part way through a strategy, 'Investing in Learning', which re-focuses the College back on teaching, learning and assessment. The College had a positive Ofsted monitoring visit in October 2013⁴, with improvements noted in all the key areas of student delivery. CoBC report a major area of concern as being the challenge of engaging those young people who do not greatly value education and training.

2.2.3 The Commission has considered the progression data from schools provided by Learning Partnerships SW (Sept 2013) with its particular focus on young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs). The Commission notes that the needs of this group of young people are being addressed in a variety of ways in the city, and recommend that the specific needs of this group along with other disadvantaged groups are considered by the Mayor. The Commission notes that the data it has been given which relates to '16-19 year olds in learning' is broad and does not provide information about the site of that learning (school or academy sixth form, FE college, sixth form college etc) which it considers would be useful.

2.2.4 The Commission recognises the particular need for a continuing focus on STEM activities in education. It has also noted the applicability of an emerging focus around STEAM (STEM which also incorporates the arts). STEAM has resonated with the Commission due to an understanding that jobs in the future will increasingly require cross-sectoral understanding (animation, high-tech industry and so on). This perception has developed from informal employer feedback and is supported by young people's feedback, which has led to the development of recommendation 1.5 as captured in Appendix B.

2.2.5 The Commission noted that destination data in general was limited to the immediate future and that little was known about students' longer term destinations and successes. Collecting this data would provide educational institutes with the opportunity to develop a better understanding of the success of their offering, thereby potentially improving it, as well as tapping into a potential rich source of IAG and aspiration-builders, in the form of their alumni. This thinking has led to recommendations 1.2.1 and 1.2.3. The Commission also reflected that it can take those emerging from education some time to settle into 'sustainable careers', and that some 'light touch' support to former students could be of great benefit to them, as well as having the very strong benefits of maximising on an educational institute's investment in their pupils and their reputation as a choice destination for future students, while being of relatively low cost to them. This led to the development of recommendation 1.2.2.

³ <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/131094>

⁴ <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/131094>

3.1 Skills gaps: national

3.1.1 National research has indicated a mismatch between what young people are studying and the jobs available. In 2012, a study⁵ was undertaken for the Local Government Association, which compared the numbers of qualifications delivered by FE colleges against labour market demand (as measured by job vacancies). The top-level findings of this study were:

- At a national level, there are significantly fewer jobs / vacancies per skills achievement in the creative industries, hair & beauty, and hospitality, leisure, travel & tourism, suggesting these sectors have an over-supply of skilled workers.
- There are significantly more jobs / vacancies per skills achievement in marketing & sales, supporting teaching & learning in schools, security industries, and fashion & textiles, suggesting these sectors have an under-supply of skilled workers.

3.1.2.1 A number of organisations have concluded that issues with the UK's education and skills system are leading to significant skills gaps (CBI, Pearson, City & Guilds, OECD⁶) and therefore sizeable negative human impacts, if not decreased international competitiveness (OECD⁷). These organisations suggest a range of solutions, many of which have resonated with the Commission, including Alison Wolf's conclusion in her 2011 Review of Vocational Education⁸, carried out for Michael Gove, that, "any young person's programme of study, whether 'academic' or 'vocational', should provide for labour market and educational progress", while the OECD notes in its Economic Survey of the United Kingdom (2013):

"The government should pursue growth-enhancing and inequality-reducing structural reforms. A prolonged period of weak growth risks worsening social inequalities. Labour market and social policies need to mitigate this risk. ... Weak skills in some segments of the workforce hinder employment and growth, and contribute to large differentials in employment and earnings across education levels. Workers' skills need enhancement, especially among students from disadvantaged backgrounds, through improved educational outcomes, reinforcing vocational training and by facilitating transition from education to work."

This particular argument has contributed to a number of the Commission's recommendations, notably recommendation 2.3 as outlined in Appendix B.

⁵ <http://www.cesi.org.uk/publications/hidden-talents-skills-mismatch-analysis>

⁶ Changing the pace, CBI/Pearson education and skills survey 2013

http://www.cbi.org.uk/media/2119176/education_and_skills_survey_2013.pdf; First steps, a new approach for our schools, CBI (2012) http://www.cbi.org.uk/media/1845483/cbi_education_report_191112.pdf; Anderson, Making Education Work, Pearson (2014) <http://uk.pearson.com/content/dam/ped/pei/uk/pearson-uk/Campaigns/making-education-work/making-education-work-online-pdf-report.pdf>; Making Education Work, City & Guilds (2013) <http://www.cityandguilds.com/~media/Documents/Courses-and-Quals/quals-explained/techbac/making-education-work%20pdf.ashx>; Economic Survey of the United Kingdom 2013, OECD <http://www.oecd.org/economy/uk2013.htm>)

⁷ UK Skill levels and international competitiveness (2012) (<http://www.ukces.org.uk/publications/er61-uk-skill-levels-and-international-competitiveness>)

⁸ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/180504/DFE-00031-2011.pdf

3.1.2.2 Professor Sir Roy Anderson's Independent Advisory Group report for Pearson, Making Education Work (2014)⁹, examined the fitness of the UK education system to prepare young people for the world of work comprehensively from a national perspective. His persuasive report calls for:

- An overhaul of the UK education system in order to meet long term economic needs.
- Greater emphasis on 'softer' or non-cognitive skills.
- Seeks a broadening of the 16-18 year old curriculum, criticising A-levels as too narrow.
- School leavers need a wider skills set.
- Need to elevate status of vocational/technical education (and improve the quality of vocational learning).
- Need for a national careers service which is aligned with the Government's growth strategy.
- Need for more direct working relationships (two-way) between employers and universities, and schools and colleges.
- More apprenticeships.
- Need for much closer working relationships, and a shared set of objectives for the education system, between the Dept for Education and the Dept for Business, Innovation & Skills.

The Mayor of Bristol's Education & Skills Commission has drawn a number of similar conclusions, albeit in a context local to Bristol.

3.1.3 The speed at which certain sectors are developing means that the traditional structure of one to two year FE courses can mean information is already out of date by the time someone completes the course. There is a need for more flexible course structures that work more closely with employers. While not without their own challenges and shortfalls, the Dutch and German systems provide strong examples of effective practice in vocational education systems, both being well regarded in their respective societies and benefiting from strong employer links¹⁰.

3.1.4 There are strong examples of good practice in supporting employability and enterprise in the UK including for example Writhlington college's¹¹ (Bath & North East Somerset) focus on the development of enterprise skills. In London, the Tower Hamlets Education Business Partnership¹² is highly successful, effectively engaging business and delivering a range of services to young people. In the South West, Cornwall Works¹³ has developed a comprehensive system of support for young people in a range of different situations, effectively engaging a large percentage of the county's numerous SMEs.

⁹ <http://uk.pearson.com/content/dam/ped/pei/uk/pearson-uk/Campaigns/making-education-work/making-education-work-online-pdf-report.pdf>

¹⁰ Vocational Education and Training in Germany Strengths, Challenges and Recommendations <http://www.oecd.org/edu/skills-beyond-school/45938559.pdf>; Casey, the Vocational Education and Training System in Netherlands, UKCES (2013) <http://www.ukces.org.uk/assets/ukces/docs/publications/briefing-paper-vocational-education-system-netherlands.pdf>

¹¹ <http://www.wsbe.org.uk/business.php?page=enterprise-at-writhlington>

¹² <http://thebp.org/>

¹³ <http://www.cornwallworks.org.uk/cornwall-works/about-cornwall-works.html>

3.2 Skills gaps: Bristol and the West of England

3.2.1 The Commission reviewed the Centre for Economic & Social Inclusion's data around skills gaps in the West of England and Bristol, which highlights the shortages of skilled workers in a number of sectors (attached as Appendix D, extract below). This provides detail at local authority and local enterprise partnership (LEP) level. For the West of England, the full data shows significant skills mismatches in some selected sectors, with a vacancy to achievement ratio below one indicating an over-supply of skills, and a ratio above one indicating a skills shortage. Informal feedback from employers to Bristol City Council suggests there is an increasing need for generic and specialist digital and technical skills, and supply is not currently keeping up with this.

	Automotive industries	Building Services	Construction	Hair & Beauty	Hospitality & tourism
Achievements, all ages	500	990	1,760	2,270	2,610
Achievements, under 19	280	180	770	1,510	1,190
JCP vacancies	513	1,818	5,267	278	294
Inclusion estimated vacancies	1,308	1,818	5,267	278	560
Vacancies per achievements, all ages	2.62	1.84	2.99	0.12	0.21
Vacancies per achievements, under 19	4.67	10.10	6.84	0.18	0.47

3.2.2 This, together with developments in the TQEZ, has the potential to provide a significant opportunity for Bristol's young people. As will be seen from survey findings, young people have indicated an interest in understanding market opportunities to inform their career decisions. The gap suggests a lack of information about the market reaching young people, which in turn has centrally informed the development of recommendations 2 and 2.1.5. The Commission also recommends improving young people's perceptions of STEM subjects as per recommendation 1.1.6.

3.2.3 The rise of vocational routes to employment, how these can be perceived by young people, the barriers young people face to secure opportunities, including increased competition from older people, as well as the issues both vocational and academic routes can pose to those from lower income backgrounds were discussed by the Commission. The Commission concluded there is a risk that vocational routes to employment are often perceived to be an inferior option and that employers need to proactively work against this perception should they consider it incorrect. This is captured in recommendation 2.2.5, which also highlights a need for the Mayor and partners to ensure that individuals from lower income backgrounds are not excluded from vocational and/or other routes.

4. Temple Quarter Enterprise Zone

4.1.1 In his 2011 Budget, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced the creation of 21 Enterprise Zones in Local Enterprise Partnership areas, indicating that one would be located in the West of England area. LEPs were expected to grant enterprise zone (EZ) status to areas that offered development opportunities genuinely attractive to the market and that were likely to lead to new jobs and business growth. EZs had to offer the opportunity to minimise regulatory burdens, particularly by offering scope to simplify the planning process. EZs were also expected to provide a platform for both the public and private sectors to work together to drive development, and to generate growth in business rates that could be used to further economic development in LEP areas. The West of England LEP ran a competition to select the area to become its EZ and chose Bristol Temple Quarter.

4.1.2 Officers reported to the Commission an understanding that Bristol Temple Quarter offers strong potential to deliver against all of these requirements. As of 2011 it had potential to accommodate 17,000 jobs in 240,000 sq. m of development, and generate a substantial amount of business rate growth as a result. Some development has already taken place but much of this potential still exists. The public and private sectors are major landowners, and will need to work together to deliver against these targets. With almost half of the sites without planning permission, the area offers substantial scope to simplify the planning process and drive development.

4.1.3 Officers reported that the TQEZ offers the city the potential to deliver against other goals including:

- Driving the regeneration of one of the city's and city region's key gateway locations.
- Adding further impetus to the above by offering the potential to link site development to the major refurbishment of Bristol Temple Meads Station, itself driven in part by the electrification of the main line to London by 2017.
- Generating sustainable, accessible job opportunities in an area that will be a focus for major suburban transport initiatives, such as the MetroBus and MetroRail projects.
- Capitalising on existing strengths of an area already established as a successful business location, home to key knowledge based industries such as creative, digital, environmental and finance and business sectors.

4.2.1 The Commission received information from Bristol City Council Officers regarding the evidence behind the growth projections. This indicated that job vacancy projections are based on available space in the TQEZ, and that growth plans are based firmly on flexibility in response to industry needs coupled with an active marketing strategy.

4.2.2 Target sectors for the area are creative, high tech, low carbon, media, and financial & professional services, as well as the supporting sectors needed to make the area function effectively as a business and residential destination (retail, hospitality, leisure and transportation). Focused marketing campaigns are being developed for the first four sectors, and there is understood to be a need to help ensure a supply of skills for these sectors. There will also be ongoing needs in the construction sector for some years as the various sites are developed.

4.2.3 Officers commented on the difficulty of being precise about specific qualifications that will be required, partly because some of the target sectors are developing so rapidly that qualifications currently available may well be out of date by the time that these jobs are available. This has informed the development of recommendation 1.1.7 which is focused on encouraging IAG advisors to focus on 'fields of work' rather than specific jobs. The former ensuring that young people are not pigeon-holed into specific streams (eg doctor or nurse) prematurely, but are instead encouraged to engage and develop their qualifications and skills in a broader field of employment. It also led to the development of recommendation 1.1.5, which is designed to ensure that the 'bigger picture' of subsequent career opportunities is considered rather than subjects being promoted as an ends in themselves.

4.2.4 Officers reported that many businesses in the target sectors are small, with a high proportion of self-employed / freelance workers. Small employers, which tend to particularly dominate in the creative and digital sectors, are likely to find it a particular challenge to engage with young people and provide work experience. Officers reported their understanding that young people will need support to understand how to find work in this environment. Reducing the barriers to engagement which exist for smaller employers has centrally informed the development of recommendations 2.1.6, and 2.2.1 – 2.2.4.

5. Consultation with young people

5.1 Members of the Commission sought the views of young people during the process of developing their recommendations, meeting with and gaining representation from Bristol's Youth Select Committee, running focus groups with young people, running an online survey, and meeting directly with young people at their January meeting. Lines of enquiry were developed and conclusions drawn from this contact, further details of which can be found below.

5.2 Focus group work took place in three schools in the North, South and East of Bristol, and with a group of young people with disabilities. The school focus groups looked at four key questions and generally the young people were found to have been comfortable with the concept of striving and understanding of the importance of qualifications. Those spoken to had a good idea of what employers want (though it was acknowledged this might not be universally understood), and valued money but didn't perceive it to be the main goal. From meeting with the group of young people with disabilities, it was concluded that those facing similar challenges were likely to need significant support to secure work, as such that they should be specifically considered by the Mayor. This is captured in recommendation 3.2. The Commission acknowledges that due to the support provided young people in the schools it worked with, that the responses may not be entirely typical and young people at other schools may have much less knowledge and awareness, and lower levels of aspiration.

5.3.1 An online survey was carried out in December 2013, with 270 young people responding over a 17 day consultation period. The survey findings are summarised below, and is available in full at Appendix E.

5.3.2 The survey found that there was considerable appetite for more information / advice on jobs and careers with 50% of respondents saying they would like more. 40% perceived they already access useful information, however a notable 10% perceive they didn't. There was considerable overlap between the first category and the latter two.

5.3.3 Websites and family were the most strongly preferred sources of information and advice, and as such IAG providers should consider how to use these channels most effectively. It was not clear whether websites were being used for specific industry and jobs research or whether respondents are referring to dedicated careers guidance sites (anecdotal feedback from later conversations indicated the former was the case). Friends, teachers and careers advisors were also considered significant sources of information and advice, respondents however were less convinced they would use these sources than websites and family. Among other conclusions, this led to recommendation 1.1.2.

5.3.4 In terms of what is influencing young people's decision-making around careers, four considerations came out as highly or fairly important to the vast majority of question respondents: the respondent's skills, qualifications and aptitudes; available jobs / career opportunities; their interests; and a long held ambition. This suggests that the majority of respondents engaged in a pragmatic analysis of their strengths and opportunities in the market place, combining these with

‘internal’ motivators. It is possible of course that respondents had not considered their motivators in this way before.

5.3.5 It is worth emphasising that respondents stated an interest in considering what jobs / career opportunities are available to influence their decision-making. This is at odds with statistics demonstrating an over and undersupply of people for specific careers, and suggests the problem could lie with a lack of information for young people.

5.3.6 Of the other influences, current / past jobs / work experience and the cost of training / higher education came out as fairly important to the majority of question respondents, with these being highly important to a large number of the remaining respondents. Along with other evidence, this led to recommendation 1.6.

5.3.7 Overwhelmingly the key barriers / challenges respondents said they felt they faced were:

- Getting the right grades to help them with their next stage / overall career goals.
- The costs of higher education and a lack of understanding if / how it can be affordable.
- A perception that there are very few jobs available, let alone interesting jobs, and that young people are specifically disadvantaged due to their lack of work experience.

5.3.8 Other barriers / challenges felt were:

- A lack of understanding of areas that career guidance could help with, eg how to become what you want to become; the benefits versus costs of going to University; not knowing what to become etc. Among other conclusions, this contributed to the development of recommendations 1.1.4, 1.6, 2 and 2.1.
- A perception of a need to develop one’s personal skills including most notably a need to develop self-confidence, but also managing one’s career (which has overlap with the above area), and developing ‘people skills’, which contributed to the development of recommendation 1.

5.3.9 Respondents were asked to outline the key barriers and challenges they feel they face in succeeding using free text. Free text responses tend to receive a low level of response in surveys, however 200 people in total answered this question. One respondent’s comment encapsulates a general theme of drive, pragmatism and the challenges felt that was found more widely in the survey responses:

“All I can find are jobs in shops like Asda or Tesco which wouldn’t give me the experience I would like to have for my future jobs. I would like to open my own clothing business in future therefore a part time job in a clothing retail company like Zara or Topshop would be very useful however in my opinion more “attractive” jobs aren’t available for students (16-18 year olds).”

5.4 Around 21 young people joined the Commission’s January meeting. The young people demonstrated considerable interest in the Commission members’ career paths and contributed freely to conversations. Some ideas that developed included a strong interest from young people in work experience / volunteering, being able to focus on ‘competencies’ rather than just GCSEs, an active interest in the future opportunities envisaged for Bristol, being able to choose their options

later as they were worried about ruling out paths now that they would later want to explore, and an ask that the 'divide' between STEM and arts fields is reduced as they can see a number of professions and fields where you need to understand both. These points confirmed and/or developed the Commission's position in a number of areas including 4.8.

5.5 Feedback from young people has led to and/or confirmed the Commission's position on a number of recommendations including PEBL (recommendation 1), work experience (recommendations 1.1.1 and 2.1.2), valuing vocational routes more (1.1.3 and 2.2.5), and supporting innovative approaches (1.3.3).

6. Information, advice and guidance (IAG) and employability/enterprise skills

6.1 Nationally and locally employers persistently feedback that they value candidates who can demonstrate a high level of 'employability skills' (including for example flexibility, adaptability and a willingness to learn on the job). They also persistently feedback concerns that the education system does not prepare young people for the world of work (see for example City & Guilds' 2013 report, 'Making Education Work'¹⁴). The arguments and weight of evidence behind this outlook have been convincing and have centrally informed the Commission's recommendations. It is most notably reflected in recommendation 1, the development of a Passport for Employability in Bristol.

6.2 The Commission was provided with evidence of the range of IAG provided in higher education (HE) and the considerable investment UWE and UoB put into ensuring their students have appropriate IAG, supported by appropriate experiences, placement, internships and so on (see Appendix C). The Commission's view was that this is generally fit for purpose given the high employment rate of both institutions' graduates, although neither institution should be complacent and should continue to review and enhance its provision.

6.3 Provision in FE is also well embedded according to information provided to the Commission. CoBC provides access to training and education for a number of areas of learning. The College works with a number of employers to address the skills gaps in the city, and also works with the other colleges in the West of England in working towards a holistic picture of provision across the area. The Colleges are a key component of the LEP, and the Skills Board is chaired by a local Principal who gave evidence to the Commission.

6.4 IAG in the schools sector has become somewhat fragmented, according to information gathered and the evidence provided by experts, and the quality varies across institutions, which matches national findings from Ofsted and others. IAG in schools is a contested policy area (for example, Michael Gove's comments in December 2013 about the lack of impact of careers advisers in schools and his view that face-to-face guidance is of limited value (at odds with the evidence seen by the Commission)). IAG specialists spoke of difficulties created by IAG being managed at a school level since national policy changed in this area, including issues around a lack of prioritisation at school level due to a focus on GCSE results, a lack of impartiality (some IAG specialists being under pressure to recruit to sixth form for example) and, in some parts of the education system, of substantial resources being wasted as IAG specialists carry out their own research as opposed to using 'central' resources and/or sharing knowledge and information with each other systematically. This, along with other evidence, has led to recommendations 1.1.4, 2 and 2.1.

6.5 The Commission noted that the Subsidiary Guidance to Ofsted inspectors conducting Section 5 inspections of schools (January 2014¹⁵) includes:

"When considering whether the curriculum has sufficient breadth and balance and the extent to which it meets the needs, aptitudes and interests of pupils, inspectors should note ... The

¹⁴ <http://www.cityandguilds.com/~media/Documents/Courses-and-Quals/quals-explained/techbac/making-education-work%20pdf.ashx>

¹⁵ <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/subsidiary-guidance-supporting-inspection-of-maintained-schools-and-academies> p29

extent to which timely information, advice and guidance provide pupils with a good understanding of the full range of options available to assist them to make informed decisions about their next steps in education, training or employment; the availability and quality of advice and guidance on learning and career pathways; and whether staff have the necessary qualifications, experience and skills to provide information, advice and guidance.”

There was concern from the Commission that this may be undervalued by inspectors, which led to recommendation 1.4.

6.6 IAG is one part of how young people are prepared for employment /enterprise, but effective IAG needs to be linked to systematic development of relevant dispositions, skills, knowledge and attitudes, as contained in recommendation 1. This is done to some extent in schools, but provision and approaches are variable. In a few schools and the local University Technical College (UTC), it is a key focus of the vision and approach. However, the inevitable focus in some schools on core subjects to ensure GCSE success, can mean that IAG and employability is moved to the margins. The Commission saw the need to influence the school curricula but in ways that add value and do not look like 'additional content'. It also considered that cultural shifts in schools need to take place, with a greater awareness of and commitment to embedding employability and enterprise across and beyond the formal curriculum as contained in recommendation 1.1.8. As such the Commission concluded that, in line with those who gave evidence, it did not consider schools need additional funding, but instead stronger encouragement from Ofsted to prioritise preparing young people for the world of work, as captured in recommendation 1.4.

6.7 Three Government departments are responsible for the transition from school to work (Dept for Education, Dept for Work & Pensions, and the Dept for Business, Innovation & Skills). It was understood that these departments' policies do not always align and there is potential for them to work better to help all young people make the transition into work successfully¹⁶. Improvements should include considering changes to the national curriculum and improved guidance for schools in the area of IAG, to include employability and enterprise skills, and to take account of the skill needs of the new economy. Drawing on learning from the vocational education systems in Germany and the Netherlands, the Commission was also keen to ensure that the Government should make no further institutional changes for some years so that the reformed system has the opportunity to 'bed down' and be made to work. This led to recommendation 2.3.

6.8 HE and FE institutions, schools and voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations provide some IAG and related activities for school pupils in Bristol. Some of this, but not all, is evaluated in terms of impact. This and the other gaps noted in this report around a lack of systematic monitoring of impact (as per paragraphs 6.10 and 6.15 for example) led to recommendation 2.1.3 which is designed to ensure that maximum value is realised from all initiatives in this area supporting young people in Bristol.

6.9 The Commission noted an initiative set up by UWE in September 2013 that brought key stakeholders together to focus on improving IAG in the Bristol region. The Mayor is asked to

¹⁶ Anderson, Making Education Work, Pearson (2014)
<http://uk.pearson.com/content/dam/ped/pei/uk/pearson-uk/Campaigns/making-education-work/making-education-work-online-pdf-report.pdf> for example.

consider the potential of this initiative and whether it could provide a mechanism through which to implement a number of the Commission's recommendations.

6.10 There are a number of established and emerging initiatives in Bristol that involve businesses in supporting schools in these areas. The Commission looked at some of these and noted a lack of systematic evaluation of the impact which means a lack of evidence of which activities actually make a difference. The work of Ablaze, in collaboration with the City Council, focuses on schools where the need is greatest is noted and welcomed. The Commission also welcomed the LEP-led Employability Chartermark initiative and would like to see further evidence of its impact through its initial phase. It also however saw the need for a stronger case about the benefits to business being made to them (which would include Corporate Social Responsibility, identifying potential employees and enhancing the well-being of staff who volunteer).

6.11 The Commission has developed a good understanding of a number of national and local initiatives, however it acknowledges that its knowledge is not comprehensive.

6.12 The Commission recognised that not all IAG provided is of an acceptable quality and there is an acknowledged lack of knowledge amongst some providing IAG about the nature of employers' needs into the future, including those in the TQEZ, and therefore there is a training issue. However, the Commission also saw a need to improve the understanding of some employers about the nature of education and qualifications in the current context.

6.13 A recommendation which emerged linked to the above was the idea of a Passport to Employability in Bristol (PEBL) which would provide any young person educated in Bristol with core entitlements and other optional 'destinations' they are encouraged to 'visit' to develop their potential for employment/enterprise. Were this to be implemented, the Commission recommends a pilot focused on the TQEZ and school(s) local to it. See recommendation 1.

6.14 Another area of work in the city of relevance to the Commission's aims is the considerable range of initiatives/activities aimed specifically at raising young people's aspirations. The difference this work has made to young people that experienced this was highly apparent, and led to recommendation 1.3.1. The Commission recommended that building young people's aspirations should start before the age of 14.

6.15 Again the work that universities, CoBC, schools and a number of VCS organisations are doing around raising aspirations was evident to the Commission. Much of this, but certainly not all, is based in school settings. There is some evidence of impact of some of these initiatives, but again the impact evidence is varied. As with the issues outlined by paragraphs 6.8 and 6.10, the Commission considers that ensuring this information is accessible will help join up work and lead to better learning between agencies. This has led to recommendation 2.1.4.

Appendix A: Education & Skills Commission membership

Skills Provision & Schools

Professor Ron Ritchie, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Partnerships, Diversity and Civic Engagement at the University of the West of England; Chair of the Cabot Learning Federation (Chairperson)

Lynn Merilion, City of Bristol College Principal and Chief Executive

Jane Middleton, Director of Skills at the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership

Poku Pipim Osei, co-founder of Babbasa Youth Empowerment Projects (BYEP), VCS Advocate to the Bristol's Children & Young People's Attainment and Progression Board, and Voscur Trustee

Steve Taylor, Executive Principal, Cabot Learning Federation

Youth

Sanya Rajpal, Youth Select Committee

Business: general

Stephen Fear, Managing Director, the Fear Group and founder of the Fear Foundation

Creative

Heather Wright, Executive Producer, Aardman Animations

Media

Paul Appleby, Bristol Media Chairman

Low Carbon

Martin Bigg, Professor of Environmental Technology, UWE & Director of Environmental Technologies Innovation Network (iNet), UWE

Microelectronics

Rick Chapman, Microelectronics Innovation Network (iNet)

Central Government

Jon Bright, DCLG Locality Director

Paul Lucken, SW Regional Director, Skills Funding Agency

Bristol City Council

Councillor Brenda Massey, Assistant Mayor for Children, Young People and Education

Councillor Alastair Watson, Mayoral representative on the Education & Skills Commission

Emily Kippax, Strategic Support Officer (support)

Appendix B: Education & Skills Commission's recommendations

Recommendation 1

The Mayor develops a Passport for Employability in Bristol (PEBL) to provide all young people in Bristol with a baseline of 'entitlements' and opportunities to develop employability and enterprise skills and access effective IAG, as is in line with their needs and aspirations. Thereby decreasing the differences in young people's experiences resulting from the nature of the education provision they currently receive, and regardless of their access to effective support should they not be in education or training. A 'pilot' of PEBL is recommended to ensure timely development of the initiative. PEBL should be developed alongside the LEP's Employability Chartermark.

Full development of PEBL would enable the Mayor to respond effectively to recommendations 1.1 to 1.3 inclusive as outlined below, across Bristol. While 1.1 – 1.3 can be delivered within the main proposition, they can also be treated as stand-alone issues that are addressed separately and/or beyond the scope of PEBL.

- 1.1 Education providers should improve IAG for all young people in education (including those under the age of 14), and increase their opportunities to further develop employability, enterprise and social enterprise dispositions, skills, knowledge and experience:
 - 1.1.1 Help young people access meaningful work experience opportunities.
 - 1.1.2 Engage directly with young people's families and communities.
 - 1.1.3 Encourage young people to recognise and value different routes into employability and enterprise, including, for example, vocational routes.
 - 1.1.4 Encourage FE and HE providers to work in partnership with regard to employability and enterprise/IAG to maximise benefits, and avoid duplication and mixed messages.
 - 1.1.5 Consider focusing more on career opportunities rather than subject choice as an end in itself.
 - 1.1.6 Consider how to improve young people's perception of STEM subjects.
 - 1.1.7 Promote the concept of 'fields of work' rather than specific roles/jobs.
 - 1.1.8 Consider adapting the curriculum to develop young people's employability and enterprise skills.
- 1.2 Education providers should improve IAG for those who have left formal full-time education:
 - 1.2.1 Collect data regarding student progression (which would also enable providers to modify their offering to ensure it is fit for purpose).
 - 1.2.2 Support former students with IAG as outlined in 1.1 for up to three years, in order to help young people into 'sustainable careers'.
 - 1.2.3 Consider developing an alumni system where successful young people inform and engage with the subsequent cohort.
- 1.3 Young people should be involved as active participants in their futures and given additional opportunities for development:
 - 1.3.1 Further enhance the support and provision designed to raise young people's aspirations with regard to their future and, particularly, employability. This should

begin before the age of 14.

- 1.3.2 Young people are involved in the governance of the TQEZ / Engagement Hub and any other engagement hubs that are developed around Bristol.
- 1.3.3 Test out innovative and/or young people led initiatives to support progression into and in employment.

1.4 The Mayor should work with Ofsted to explore how they can strengthen the inspection element that focuses on how well prepared young people are for the world of work, by (1) improving the quality of the questions asked, (2) increasing the profile and significance of this element to overall assessments, and (3) promoting this aspect to the media and other stakeholders.

1.5 The Mayor investigates mechanisms to demonstrate the value of further integrating Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths subjects with the Arts (STEAM), in response to the needs of the emerging economy.

1.6 The Mayor ensures that the real costs of different routes to employment are made transparent to young people.

Recommendation 2

The Mayor leads partners in the city to develop an 'Engagement Hub' in the TQEZ, to address the key issues that the city faces in this area. The purpose of the Engagement Hub is to enable businesses, education providers and young people to come together for initiatives/activities aimed at raising aspirations, promoting employability and enterprise, and facilitating and enhancing the provision of IAG and employability and enterprise. The Mayor should work with partners to create similar spaces beyond the TQEZ.

Development of the Engagement Hub would enable the Mayor to respond effectively to the recommendations outlined below within a specific geographical area. Recommendations 2.1 to 2.3 inclusive should be considered within the context of the Engagement Hub pilot recommendation, for wider implementation across Bristol, and as stand-alone issues that can be addressed separately.

2.1 Bristol organisations, including business, should work more closely with each other and surrounding authorities, to ensure more effective approaches to work related to employability and enterprise/IAG across the greater Bristol region. This should include referring young people to other providers as appropriate, and sharing knowledge and intelligence about social and cultural practices and the specific challenges faced by some young people, which impact either negatively or positively on young peoples' progression into employment.

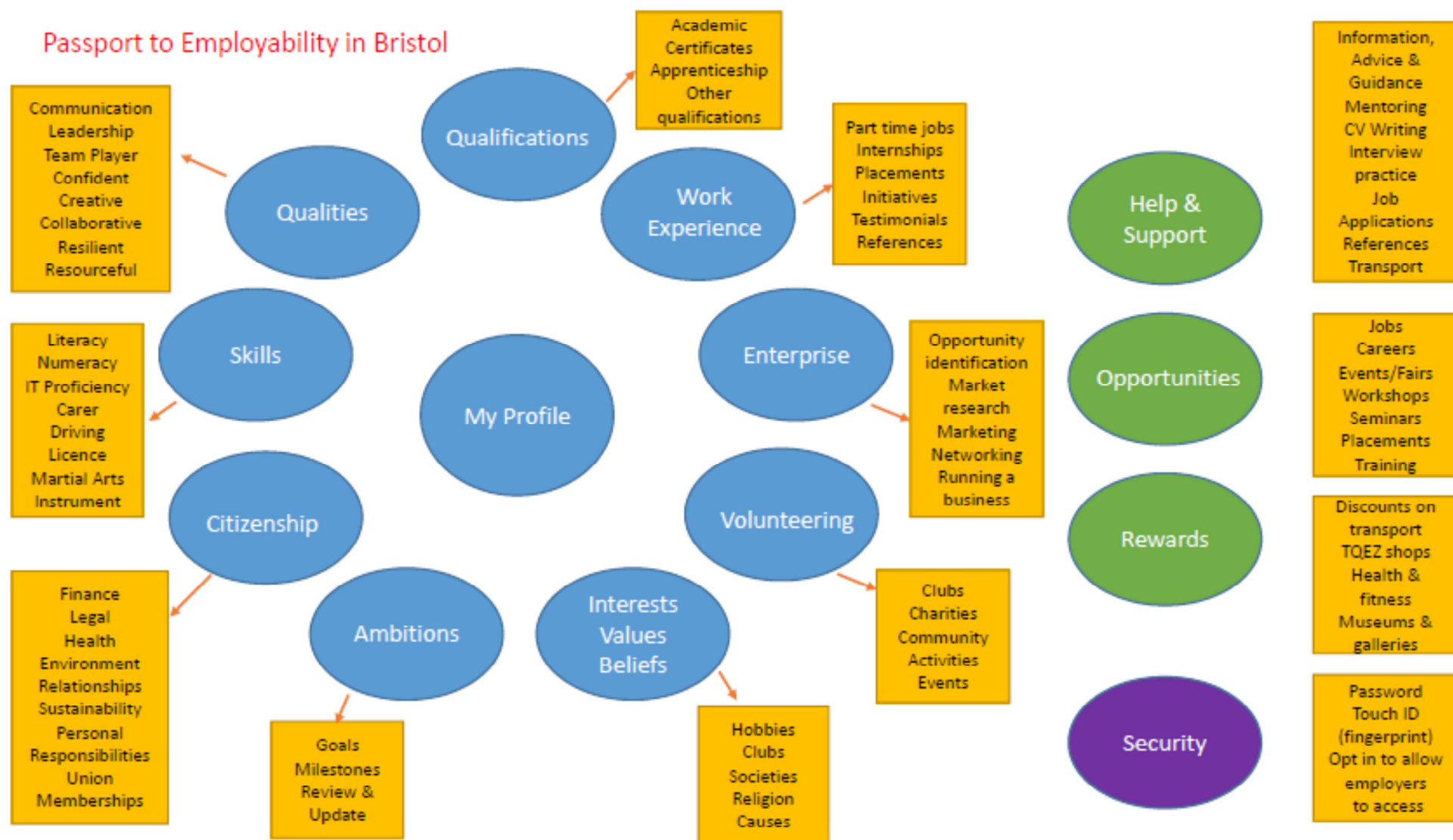
- 2.1.1 Ensure that skills development is connected to the area's employers' current and future requirements.
- 2.1.2 Support young people with meaningful work experience opportunities.
- 2.1.3 Encourage stakeholders to monitor and evaluate their work and share this information with partners, to develop a better understanding of impact and share learning.
- 2.1.4 Research and make available good practice examples of Bristol initiatives promoting employability and enterprise, and raising young people's aspirations.

- 2.1.5 Develop and maintain an accessible calendar of events for Bristol.
 - 2.1.6 Develop a scheme / work with partners to build on existing schemes to enable SMEs to link to a specific school, community or VCS organisation, ensuring that underperforming schools (etcetera) are not excluded.
- 2.2 Business and, recognising the specific barriers they face, SMEs particularly should be helped and encouraged to support young people and to engage with the Engagement Hub.
- 2.2.1 Explore the levers to provide tax and rates incentives to business in the TQEZ in return for engaging young people, focusing on the four key sectors as a pilot for this.
 - 2.2.2 Employers should communicate the career pathways and their emerging needs related to employees for the foreseeable future, especially in the context of the TQEZ.
 - 2.2.3 Develop a 'brokerage service' which enables SME employers to write a brief for the type of person they would like to employ, with the service then mediating between individuals and the employer to ensure that young people maximise their chances of employment in a market where open recruitment does not take place routinely.
 - 2.2.4 SME employers should recognise and share with other SME employers the benefits of working with educational providers and young people to raise their aspirations and enhance their employability and enterprise skills, and develop case studies.
 - 2.2.5 Different routes into employment and enterprise should be regarded of equal value, and described as such by employers, and individuals from lower income backgrounds should not be excluded from vocational and/or other routes to employment.
- 2.3 The three Government departments responsible for the transition from school to work (Dept for Education, Dept for Work & Pensions, and the Dept for Business, Innovation & Skills) should ensure their policies are aligned and work better than they do at present to help all young people make the transition into work successfully. This should include considering changes to the national curriculum and improved guidance for schools in the area of IAG, to include employability and enterprise skills, and take account of the skill needs of the new economy. Having improved the system, Government should make no further institutional changes for some years so that the reformed system has the opportunity to 'bed down' and be made to work.

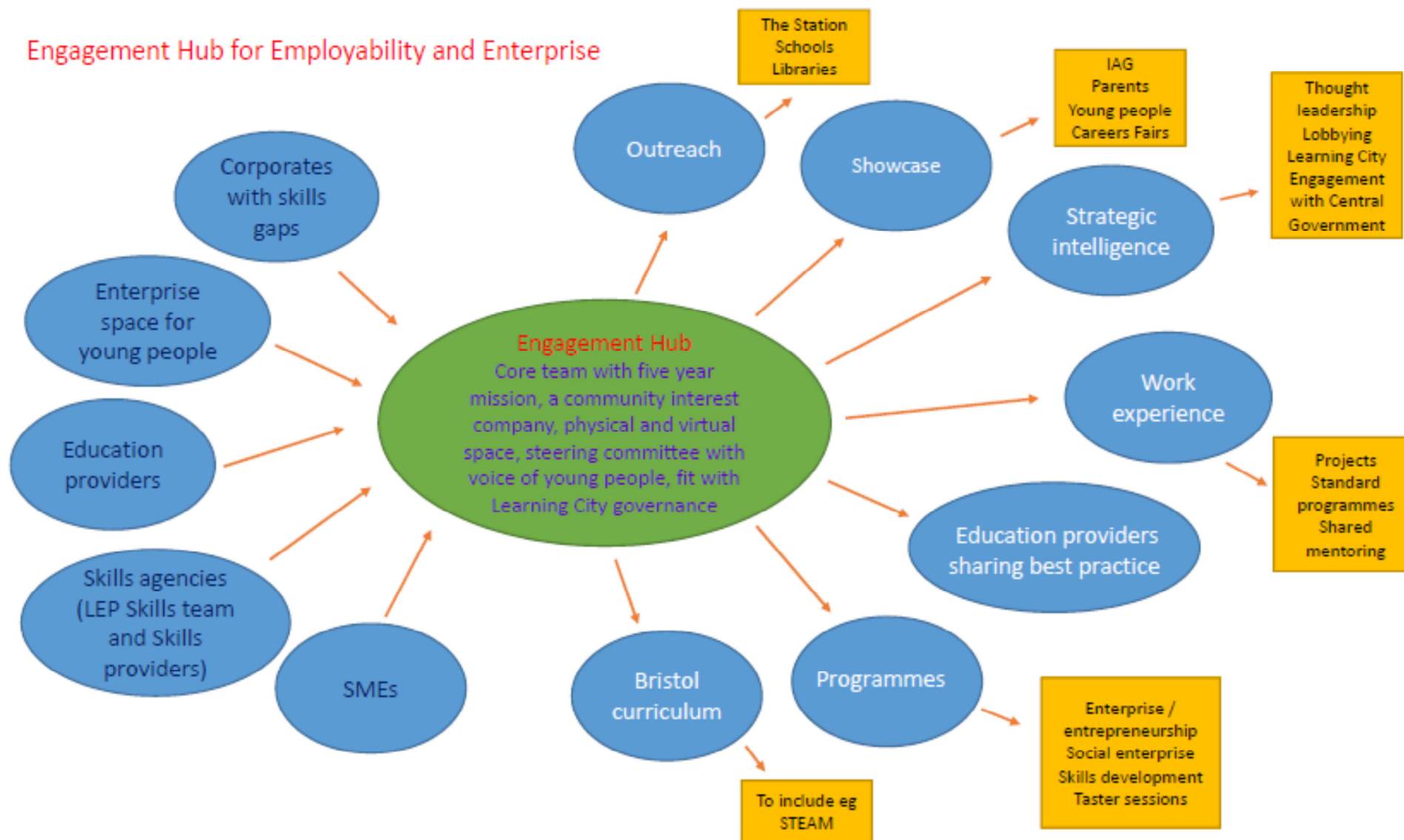
Further recommendations

- 3.1 That the recommendations are shared with a broader cross-section of stakeholders. In particular they would benefit from the greater involvement of and consultation with larger businesses within and beyond the TQEZ, and young people.
- 3.2 That the Mayor carries out further research into the specific barriers to employment, enterprise and social enterprise for young people from disadvantaged groups and how their barriers to employment can be overcome, including those from specific communities and ethnic minorities, those not in education, employment or training, those with learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities, and those facing mental health issues.

Passport to Employability in Bristol



Engagement Hub for Employability and Enterprise



Appendix C: Submissions from the University of the West of England, University of Bristol, City of Bristol College

University of the West of England (UWE) submission, November 2013

Employability - at the heart of the new UWE 20:20 strategy

UWE's new [20:20 Strategy](#) states *"Advancing knowledge, inspiring people and transforming futures is at the heart of everything that we do". Our ambition is "to be known nationally and internationally as the best university for professionally recognised and practice-oriented programmes, which contribute to an outstanding learning experience and generate excellent graduate employment opportunities and outcomes for all students". A key priority is "Ready and able graduates: Graduates ready and able to realise their full potential, make a positive contribution to society and their chosen field of employment or further study and play their full part in the development of a sustainable global society and knowledge economy."*

Success through strategic investment in Employability and Enterprise activity

UWE has achieved year on year improvements in undergraduate employment outcomes over the last five years - the latest DLHE data released by HESA shows UWE graduate unemployment at 5.2% (against 9.1% nationally). In summer 2013 the Telegraph ranked [UWE 8th in the country for getting a job](#). Significant investment in a new Employability and Enterprise Service launched in September 2012 brings together UWE Careers service, placement activity from across UWE, student enterprise and entrepreneurship activity, and student volunteering. The new team provides a more coherent service to employers and students and focuses activity on building student success in line with UWE's strategy.

- 1. Pro-active links to the economic buoyancy of the region**
- 2. Engaging SME's in graduate recruitment**
- 3. Attracting large businesses to recruit UWE graduate talent**
- 4. Embedding employability and enterprise for all students within a "practice oriented" curriculum**
- 5. Direct action for diversity**
- 6. Supporting the career development of international students**
- 7. Entrepreneurship activity: Supporting Student, Graduate and Staff Entrepreneurs**
- 8. Enterprise activity: Supporting Students to develop their enterprise skills**
- 9. Building global and cultural awareness in all students**
- 10. Promoting activities that build employability to all students through a new skills award**

1. Pro-active links to the economic buoyancy of the region

The region is anticipating 3.4% annual growth by 2020, £1 billion of private sector investment over the next three years and 95,000 new jobs by 2030 (source West of England LEP). Projections for a planned enterprise area in Bristol City Centre focus on the need to recruit to thousands of new jobs at high skills levels - <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/page/business-bristol/economic-information-and-analysis>.

The continuing economic development of the region is dependent on a supply chain of high skills graduates. UWE students are more likely to want to stay in the West of England region than students from other HEIs and are now the primary high skills labour source for the area – the latest DLHE data shows 42%(2045) of UWE graduates remained in the region (source HEFCE DLHE 2012).

UWE's commitment to the economic development of the region includes UWE staff representation at Board and committee level in Business West, the West of England LEP, and Wiltshire LEP. UWE Employability and Enterprise is currently working with Business West to develop a new graduate job vacancy portal "[Graduate Talent West](#)" launched this Autumn to give their 6000 members an easy route to recruiting graduates

2. Engaging SME's in graduate recruitment

UWE runs one of the largest funded internship programmes in the country and has subsidised over 800 regional businesses to offer over 1200 internships since February 2010. We target and achieve 80% SME company participation. 97% of the employers who have participated have rated Excellent & Good for service provided by us and value of funding provided. . From our graduate internship schemes on average at least 40% of graduates have remained with their internship employer on a permanent contract. In 2012 33% of our undergraduate interns continued to work for their employer during their studies and the data so far from our 2013 undergraduate scheme suggests the figure to be much higher at 58%. In addition, from the 2012 and 2013 Graduate and Undergraduate Internship schemes, we have measured business impact from the internship scheme and 29% reported that their business profile has been increased as a direct result of the internship.

In the last two years 6722 organisations have advertised 1 or more vacancies with us – 77% of these are SME's.

One of our Meet the Employers Fairs this year will be for SME's to showcase and raise their profile to our students and graduates.

We have also invited a number of SME businesses to a networking and training event in December where they will learn about best practice in graduate recruitment, by networking with a number of established graduate recruiters and members of the Association of Graduate Recruiters, with the AGR's chief exec as the key note speaker. This is the first event of it's kind, highlighting UWE Bristol as an innovative university to potential recruiter partners.

3. Attracting large businesses to recruit UWE graduate talent

Annually UWE Careers welcomes over 200 large employers on to our campuses for employability related events including a series of Meet the Employer fairs, employer presentations and drop ins and focus weeks. In 2012/13 we hosted 8 Meet the Employer sector specific events and have 8 planned for 2013/14. In addition we actively work with the Association of Graduate Recruiters and will be hosting the spring regional AGR meeting.

4. Embedding employability and enterprise for all students within a "practice oriented" curriculum

UWE strategy recognises the key link between high quality work experience and positive graduate outcomes. Sandwich placements are of particular value. During the first year of operation of the new Employability and Enterprise service achieved increased uptake of sandwich placements of 33% in the Business School and 21% in the Department of Engineering Design and Mathematics. Employability and Enterprise staff are working with faculty staff to embed meaningful work related activity in to all courses not just traditional sandwich areas. New placement activity is planned for subjects including Psychology, Geography and all Creative Industries programmes.

Careers Consultants are now directly involved in the development of new courses and the review of existing ones ensuring that courses have considered the employability of graduates and making recommendations for changes to the design of courses where issues have been highlighted.

5. Direct action for diversity

UWE is an inclusive university with a diverse student population. We acknowledge that students from under represented in the graduate labour market can be disadvantaged due to reduced access to financial support and the

networking opportunities and work experience that build knowledge and confidence in career planning and the job application process.

The ILM accredited [Career Development Programme](#) is run by Employability and Enterprise in partnership with faculty academics and regional businesses. It is offered to 100 Year 2 students and develops employability and enterprise skills in the wider context of the graduate labour market in order to transform student's perceptions of their place in this market. Students who complete the taught component of the Career Development Programme and are from backgrounds that are under represented in the graduate labour market, are helped to secure high quality work experience in the Easter and Summer vacations of the second year and have the opportunity to be linked with a professional or manager in a local business as a career mentor in their final year. *"I think it is really useful for disadvantaged students who don't have access to good advice from family and friends to help them through the job application process."* Solicitor – Veale Wasborough. *"The UWE students we have had have exceeded expectations. They seem to really value the experience and are very committed and enthusiastic."* Recruitment Manager, Beachcroft LLP

For the new academic year we have created a £50,000 fund for £500 travel bursaries for students from low income backgrounds to enable them to access overseas travel opportunities that provide demonstrable employability benefits.

6. Supporting the career development of international students

UWE recruits students from more than 100 countries and acknowledges its responsibility to support the career development of those students, most of whom will be unable to stay in the UK on graduation.

UWE's innovative [GradLink UK service](#), launched in 2013, is a unique one-stop web portal that enables employers from different countries to connect with international students, scholars and graduates from all universities across the UK. GradLink UK is the specialist careers website designed for UK-educated students and graduates from China, India, Africa and Malaysia. For students/graduates GradLink UK is the essential place for learning about graduate opportunities and connecting with graduate employers in their home country. The website includes vacancies, graduate profiles, employer contacts, in-depth advice and much more. For businesses GradLink UK is a free one-stop portal for connecting with high-quality students and graduates from China, India, Africa and Malaysia, who are at universities right across the UK. This is their opportunity to advertise the opportunities on offer in their home country. Over 25,000 unique users accessed this site in its first three months. The [International Talent Scheme](#) enables overseas students to gain work experience whilst providing an international business asset to the company. Opportunities range from translation and interpreting services to researching and identifying new markets to liaising with key suppliers, clients and customers in a specific overseas market.

For the new academic year we have created a £50,000 fund for £500 travel bursaries for students from low income backgrounds to enable them to access overseas travel opportunities that provide demonstrable employability benefits.

7. Entrepreneurship activity: Supporting Student, Graduate and Staff Entrepreneurs

In summer 2013 UWE created an incubator space for student entrepreneurs and the student enterprise societies co located with the career coaching services in a high profile central location on the main campus

In the academic years 2012/2013 and 2013/2014 UWE has been successful in partnering with UnLtd in their HE support delivery programme, gaining £65,000 to invest in social entrepreneurs. We offered the funding through three schemes: two rounds of the UWE better together fund with up to £3,000 available; a social enterprise internship scheme over the summer and a "try it" awards spring term application process for proof of concept funding up to £500. So far, in the first year we have invested £35,000 of funding and supported 14 social entrepreneurs, all of whom are still running their business. Each award winner is also placed on a one year support program, where they get 6 1 hour 1-2-1 goal setting appointments and unlimited email and phone support. Every unsuccessful applicant is also given detail feedback by the judging panel and support. The delivery team for this programme was made up of representatives from across the

University: Alumni, Volunteering, Academia and Employability and Enterprise, contributing over 300 hours towards the delivery of the programme.

In Summer 2012 and 2013 we offered our students the opportunity to work on their own business over the summer through our student enterprise internship programme. We have supported 17 people and 15 businesses on this scheme, who were given £1,000 desk space and support for 8 weeks over the summer. Each business is assigned an external coach who helps them to set goals every week. 3 of the businesses from our enterprise internship scheme this year went on to do a self-employed placement

For those Entrepreneurs in who would like a longer to time to run a business, we offer the opportunity to do a self-employed one year placement. On average we have twenty applications of interest and about half are accepted onto the scheme each year. Those who are on our support scheme as opposed to taking a “year out” have a much higher success rate.

We offer 1-2-1 appointments with our Student Enterprise Adviser to any student or recent graduate with a business idea. Over the past two academic years, we have 178 recorded 1-2-1’s which, excluding weekends equates to a demand of about 2.9 appointments per day. About 350 students have been communicated with about a potential appointment including feedback via email on their business plans. The average time of these appointments is between 20-40 minutes We run 50-70 hours of surgeries, masterclasses and workshops throughout the year for the student entrepreneur community. The student led enterprise society Innoventers also runs a networking event every month called “Start-up drinks”.

8. Enterprise activity: Supporting Students to develop their enterprise skills

We have two student enterprise societies that are 100% student led and supported by us. Every summer we employ enterprise interns over 8 weeks to design the events programme and raise sponsorship for the societies.

Innoventers is the student enterprise society and covers four campuses with its activity. They have a core team of 30 students and engage over 400 students every year. UWE invests a 250+ hours in supporting them to develop and increase their engagement year on year and ensure they have access to relevant training. They are supported by a multi-disciplinary team across the service.

Enactus is a society delivering social and commercial projects and they enter a national competition every year. We have five University advisors supporting Enactus delivering 250+ hours of support. In their first year, Enactus won the Spirit of SIFE award and in their second year, they got to the semi-finals of the competition. Every year they have a committee of between 6-12 people, run 5 projects and engage 40-80 students with the projects and reach out to over 250 students across all four campuses through other events and activities each year. They are support by a multi-disciplinary team across the service.

UWE invests time in developing professional networks and embedding student enterprise in the heart of the institution. In Autumn 2013 UWE is demonstrating its commitment to building the [enterprise and entrepreneurship skills](#) of its students by creating the new post of Entrepreneur in Residence.

Two postgraduate bootcamps spanning over 2.5 days for 40 post-graduate students and researchers are run every year, bringing in professionals and challenging them to solve a problem. At the end of the course, students get a certificate of attendance and are aided to reflect on their progress.

UWE is committed to enterprise and so looks at ways of embedding enterprise activity in the curriculum. At the moment UWE has:

- Language, enterprise and skills module in L2 English Language and Linguistics
- Enterprise project and the entrepreneurial manager in L1 Meet the management challenge for all business school students
- A pioneering new degree programme entitled “Team Entrepreneurship” where students set up and run a company as their degree
- Sociology in practice module L1 – currently a series of workshops on leadership

- Healthcare innovation workshop for ALL nurses and healthcare workers
- History in the public space, L2, self-employed project option
- An enterprise module in every subject at Hartpury campus by 2015
- Networking workshops for the Departments of Arts and Life Science

UWE alumni give up to 100+ hours a year towards supporting and inspiring students to become enterprising, entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial. UWE has won a high impact award every year for its contributions to Global Entrepreneurship Week. We run a lot of activity during this week to encourage students to get involved with enterprise, become changemakers and learn new skills. UWE recognises the importance of enterprise and entrepreneurship activity by inclusion of the activity towards the Bristol Futures award, which appears on the HEAR.

9. Building the global and cultural awareness of all students

International experience is now sought by many employers looking to recruit graduates. Graduate jobs are likely to deal with people from a huge range of different backgrounds and often to communicate with people across the globe and from many different cultures. At UWE we have students from more than 100 countries and we make the most of the cultural opportunity this provides us for initiating [international experience opportunities on-campus](#).

We also actively promote overseas opportunities. The Thailand English Teaching Project (TET) run by the British Council and the Ministry of Education in Thailand, offers 250 students the chance to work as an English language assistant with a Thai teacher, supporting classroom based learning as well as additional activities outside of school hours. UWE, taking part in the programme for the first time in Summer 2013, provided 20 of those students, [the highest representation](#) of any participating university.

For the new academic year we have created a £50,000 fund for £500 travel bursaries for students from low income backgrounds to enable them to access overseas travel opportunities that provide demonstrable employability benefits.

10 Promoting activities that build employability to all students through a new skills award

The [UWE Bristol Futures Award](#) was launched in September 2013. This employability skills award is open to all full-time and sandwich undergraduate students at UWE. It recognises and promotes the rich variety of activities that UWE students can get involved in whilst at university, and helps them develop and understand the wide range of skills they can gain by taking part and the impact this can have on their employment prospects. UWE gives this Award status and prominence with a distinct entry on the [Higher Education Achievement Report](#) (HEAR) and its achievement is noted in the graduation ceremony. In its first five weeks nearly 500 students signed up.

In November 2013 the Award is being officially launched at the first ever “Celebrating UWE Talent Prize Giving”. Welcoming a large number of businesses this event we will be rewarding the hard work of our students who have engaged in employability related activity, with prizes sponsored by local businesses.

University of Bristol (UoB) submission: response to three questions, November 2013

1. *UoB's practices with regard to IAG and preparing young people for employment and enterprise (as part of its outreach work; for its current students; and for its graduates (especially those who remain locally)). We are particularly interested in examples of what you regard as 'best practice' that could be shared.*

The University of Bristol provides a wide range of services for its students and graduates to support them into employment and enterprise.

In addition to an array of skills and professional development provision within the curriculum, including both the academic skills you'd expect from research-led teaching and the professional skills graduates need to become successful employees and employers. The Computer Science department for example provides both a Career Management Skills module to help undergraduates explore their graduate options and hone the articulation of their skills, but also a final module which helps them develop their research project into a technology start-up business plan. The whole student population within the Faculty of Medical and Veterinary Science now receives employability content and life-science start-up guidance as part of their studies.

Beyond the curriculum the Careers Service is open to current students from all disciplines and graduates up to three years out from graduation. They run literally hundreds of workshops, 1-2-1 advice sessions, and employer presentations throughout the year, and are increasingly active working with academic departments to provide tailored guidance to specific degree programmes. Over 500 employers participate in on-campus activities during the Autumn Term alone, and an impressive group of major employers formally endorse the 'Bristol PLuS' Award for student skills development.

In addition to the Careers Service the University also supports Enterprise and Entrepreneurship development through the Enterprise Education Team. The team runs an award-winning student business incubation space (Basecamp), one of the biggest student business plan competitions in the country and grants and awards over £50,000 a year to emerging social and commercial start-ups from the student body. The Enterprise Education Team run enterprise boot-camps for would-be entrepreneurs, Innovation Seminar events for researchers looking for routes into innovative companies, and a new Civic Entrepreneurship challenge which helps students develop their enterprising and professional skills through solving the city of Bristol's problems in innovative ways. These activities link to the work of the SETsquared Centre, Engine Shed, and wider university commitment to the city of Bristol as an incubator of innovative ideas.

More informally the University of Bristol Union (often in tandem with the Careers Service and Enterprise Education Team) provide a wealth of student activities through which the student body are not only indulging an interest and building up their skills, but often doing great good in the community at the same time through volunteering projects.

Many of the volunteering and social enterprise initiatives run by different elements within the university also reach out to local schools – so we have voluntary projects helping schools with core literacy skills and also with learning basic business and enterprise skills. Certainly both Merchants Academy and City Academy are working directly with student groups already.

2. *UoB's contribution to raising aspirations and the achievement of young people in Bristol, especially examples where there is evidence of impact. Examples that include links with local businesses would be welcomed (UoB's involvement in the Merchant's Academy is an excellent case study).*

The University of Bristol is proud of its contribution to raising the aspirations and attainment of young people in Bristol. We have a range of programmes to engage learners from primary school to post 16. In order to provide insights into higher education we have delivered aiming higher days to over 3,600 young people over the last twelve months. Our Access to Bristol Scheme, an academically focussed intensive eight week intervention for students in year 12 and 13 now reaches 600 students a year. The impact of the scheme is significant with over 30 per cent of those attending applying to the University.

To support students within schools, 71 University of Bristol undergraduates act as mentors and tutors in 18 local schools. Our mentors raise awareness of higher education, act as positive role models and provide an opportunity to discuss a range of issues relating to school life. Tutors provide academic support to students from across the academic ability range and teachers have reported increased participation in class and improved exam results partly as a result of involvement in the programme.

The University of Bristol sponsors the IntoUniversity Bristol East Centre which began delivery in September 2012 and opened officially in January 2013. Since then the centre has seen 878 individual take part in various schemes. As part of the 'Primary FOCUS' programme the centre has worked with six local primary schools with students in years 5 and 6 exploring the themes of enterprise, investigations, journalism and law. Working in partnership with four secondary schools, the centre has delivered 21 workshops to 371 students in Years 7 to 13. The series of workshops covers skills such as communication, independent learning and personal statement support. Academic support is offered to students at critical periods in the year with 116 primary and secondary students attending more than three sessions. The impact of IntoUniversity's work is clear; when asked whether they were more likely to go to University as a result of participation in the scheme, 82 per cent of students reported that they were. 58 per cent stated that their school marks or grades had improved and 71 per cent believed that they were working better at school.

As a co-sponsor of the Merchants' Academy, an all age academy in South Bristol, the University works closely with the Society of Merchant Venturers to raise aspirations and attainment of the students. The University has developed a progression framework, outlining the ways in which we are able to support students and teachers. This includes; visits to the University, academic support, work experience, priority places on Access to Bristol and summer schools, Continuous Professional Development (CPD) opportunities for teaching staff and a guaranteed offer for any student who applies to the University with the required grades. Attainment within the Academy has increased significantly in recent years. In 2009 only 17 per cent of students achieved five A*-C grades including Maths and English, this rose to 51 per cent in 2013.

In order to provide high quality Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) to students in local schools and colleges the University of Bristol offers a range of tailored presentations relating to higher education. We are able to provide advice on; applying to university, the student funding process, personal statement workshops and reference writing sessions for teachers and careers advisers.

3. *Any data available that you are able to share concerning the progression of UoB graduates into employment or further study (particularly related to those who remain in the greater Bristol region). The Commission was interested in the relevance of degree studies to the jobs graduates subsequently take if you have data related to that.*

Most important activity:

Working full-time - 58.0%

Working part-time - 8.6%

Unemployed and looking for work - 3.7%

Due to start a job in the next month - 1.2%

Engaged in full-time further study, training or research - 18.6%

Engaged in part-time further study, training or research - 1.9%

Taking time out in order to travel - 3.4%

Something else - 2.7%

Explicit refusal - 1.9%

The proportion of UOB graduates employed regionally is as follows:

24% London (634 graduates)

21% Bristol (558 graduates)

33% South West (including Bristol) (872 graduates)

The most popular sectors of employment for first degree graduates in 2011/12 were as follows:

Faculty of Arts: Education (14%), Wholesale and retail (13%), Arts, entertainment and recreation (8%), Finance and insurance (7%)

Faculty of Engineering: Engineering (25%), Manufacturing (18%), I.T. (14%), Finance and insurance (8%)

Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry: Health & social work (99%)

Faculty of Medical & Veterinary Sciences: Veterinary activities (39%), Health & social work (18%), Education (10%)

Faculty of Science: Education (13%), Finance and insurance (10%), Accounting & management consultancy (9%), Wholesale and retail (9%)

Faculty of Social Sciences & Law: Health & social work (13%), Accounting & management consultancy (12%), Finance & insurance (10%)

City of Bristol College progression data, November 2013

Destination Analysis - Full Time							
16-18 and 19+ Learner Responsive							
	Destination	2010/2011		2011/2012		2012/2013	
Positive Outcomes	Entered Further Education	526		1,263		1,084	
	Entered Higher Education	595		424		299	
	Found voluntary work	4		14		11	
	Full time employment	653		569		426	
	Full time education or training (not FE or HE)	14		16		90	
	Part time employment	60		162		289	
	Self-employment	25		12		26	
	Continuing existing programme of study	929		328		1,124	
	Positive outcomes Total	2,806	92%	2,788	87%	3,349	89%
Negative Outcomes	Unemployed	11		10		26	
	Economically Inactive	5		47		32	
	Not in education, employment or training	20		206		319	
	Other	208		142		46	
	Death						
	Negative outcomes Total	244	8%	405	13%	423	11%
	Total	3,050		3,193		3,772	

Appendix D: Vacancies / skills data

Compiled by the Centre for
Economic & Social Inclusion.
All data refers to 2010-11

Bath and North East Somerset
Bristol, City of
North Somerset
South Gloucestershire
West of England LEP

Automotive Industries					
Skills achievements - all ages	Skills achievements - under 19	Notified JCP vacancies	Inclusion estimate of notified or advertised vacancies	Vacancies per skills achievement (all ages)	Vacancies per skills achievement (under 19)
60	30	61	156	2.59	5.18
100	40	299	762	7.62	19.06
40	20	66	168	4.21	8.41
300	190	87	222	0.74	1.17
500	280	513	1,308	2.62	4.67

Bath and North East Somerset
Bristol, City of
North Somerset
South Gloucestershire
West of England LEP

Building Services Engineering					
Skills achievements - all ages	Skills achievements - under 19	Notified JCP vacancies	Inclusion estimate of notified or advertised vacancies	Vacancies per skills achievement (all ages)	Vacancies per skills achievement (under 19)
170	50	187	187	1.10	3.74
330	60	1,056	1,056	3.20	17.60
180	40	170	170	0.94	4.25
310	30	405	405	1.31	13.50
990	180	1,818	1,818	1.84	10.10

Bath and North East Somerset
Bristol, City of
North Somerset
South Gloucestershire
West of England LEP

Construction					
Skills achievements - all ages	Skills achievements - under 19	Notified JCP vacancies	Inclusion estimate of notified or advertised vacancies	Vacancies per skills achievement (all ages)	Vacancies per skills achievement (under 19)
270	150	851	851	3.15	5.67
690	310	2,688	2,688	3.90	8.67
280	90	809	809	2.89	8.99
520	220	919	919	1.77	4.18
1,760	770	5,267	5,267	2.99	6.84

	Creative & Cultural					
	Skills achievements - all ages	Skills achievements - under 19	Notified JCP vacancies	Inclusion estimate of notified or advertised vacancies	Vacancies per skills achievement (all ages)	Vacancies per skills achievement (under 19)
Bath and North East Somerset	440	370	313	892	2.03	2.41
Bristol, City of	610	460	189	538	0.88	1.17
North Somerset	590	500	42	120	0.20	0.24
South Gloucestershire	360	300	98	279	0.78	0.93
West of England LEP	2,000	1,630	642	1,829	0.91	1.12

	Fashion & Textiles						
	Skills achievements - all ages	Skills achievements - under 19	Notified JCP vacancies	Inclusion estimate of notified or advertised vacancies	Vacancies per skills achievement (all ages)	Vacancies per skills achievement (under 19)	
	Bath and North East Somerset	10		9	27	2.68	-
	Bristol, City of	20		10	30	1.49	-
	North Somerset			23	68	-	-
South Gloucestershire	20	20	50	149	7.44	7.44	
West of England LEP	50	20	92	274	5.47	13.68	

	Hair & Beauty					
	Skills achievements - all ages	Skills achievements - under 19	Notified JCP vacancies	Inclusion estimate of notified or advertised vacancies	Vacancies per skills achievement (all ages)	Vacancies per skills achievement (under 19)
Bath and North East Somerset	400	290	79	79	0.20	0.27
Bristol, City of	770	520	146	146	0.19	0.28
North Somerset	310	180	11	11	0.04	0.06
South Gloucestershire	790	520	42	42	0.05	0.08
West of England LEP	2,270	1,510	278	278	0.12	0.18

Bath and North East Somerset
Bristol, City of
North Somerset
South Gloucestershire
West of England LEP

Health & Safety					
Skills achievements - all ages	Skills achievements - under 19	Notified JCP vacancies	Inclusion estimate of notified or advertised vacancies	Vacancies per skills achievement (all ages)	Vacancies per skills achievement (under 19)
	-	0	0	-	-
40	-	3	3	0.08	-
10	-	12	12	1.20	-
30	-	4	4	0.13	-
80	0	19	19	0.24	-

Bath and North East Somerset
Bristol, City of
North Somerset
South Gloucestershire
West of England LEP

Hospitality, Leisure, Travel & Tourism					
Skills achievements - all ages	Skills achievements - under 19	Notified JCP vacancies	Inclusion estimate of notified or advertised vacancies	Vacancies per skills achievement (all ages)	Vacancies per skills achievement (under 19)
430	240	59	112	0.26	0.47
700	370	96	183	0.26	0.49
520	360	55	105	0.20	0.29
960	220	84	160	0.17	0.73
2,610	1,190	294	560	0.21	0.47

Bath and North East Somerset
Bristol, City of
North Somerset
South Gloucestershire
West of England LEP

Land-Based & Environmental Industries					
Skills achievements - all ages	Skills achievements - under 19	Notified JCP vacancies	Inclusion estimate of notified or advertised vacancies	Vacancies per skills achievement (all ages)	Vacancies per skills achievement (under 19)
200	90	29	246	1.23	2.74
130	20	18	153	1.18	7.65
110	60	78	663	6.03	11.05
190	100	15	127	0.67	1.27
630	270	140	1,190	1.89	4.41

	Marketing & Sales						
	Skills achievements - all ages	Skills achievements - under 19	Notified JCP vacancies	Inclusion estimate of notified or advertised vacancies	Vacancies per skills achievement (all ages)	Vacancies per skills achievement (under 19)	
	Bath and North East Somerset	10		1,449	1,449	144.90	-
	Bristol, City of	40		4,280	4,280	107.00	-
North Somerset	10		643	643	64.30	-	
South Gloucestershire	10		917	917	91.70	-	
West of England LEP	70	0	7,289	7,289	104.13	-	

	Security Industry						
	Skills achievements - all ages	Skills achievements - under 19	Notified JCP vacancies	Inclusion estimate of notified or advertised vacancies	Vacancies per skills achievement (all ages)	Vacancies per skills achievemen t (under 19)	
	Bath and North East Somerset	30		468	468	15.60	-
	Bristol, City of	210	20	843	843	4.01	42.15
North Somerset	20		276	276	13.80	-	
South Gloucestershire	20		469	469	23.45	-	
West of England LEP	280	20	2,056	2,056	7.34	102.80	

	Supporting Teaching & Learning in Schools						
	Skills achievements - all ages	Skills achievements - under 19	Notified JCP vacancies	Inclusion estimate of notified or advertised vacancies	Vacancies per skills achievement (all ages)	Vacancies per skills achievemen t (under 19)	
	Bath and North East Somerset	100		7	22	0.22	-
	Bristol, City of	50		64	198	3.96	-
	North Somerset	140	20	15	46	0.33	2.32
South Gloucestershire	120		46	142	1.19	-	
West of England LEP	410	20	132	409	1.00	20.44	

	Total (all skills achievements linked to a sector lead body)					
	Skills achievements - all ages	Skills achievements - under 19	Notified JCP vacancies	Inclusion estimate of notified or advertised vacancies	Vacancies per skills achievement (all ages)	Vacancies per skills achievemen t (under 19)
Bath and North East Somerset	5,280	2,020	11,303	11,303	2.14	5.60
Bristol, City of	13,900	5,590	34,334	34,334	2.47	6.14
North Somerset	7,190	3,890	11,006	11,006	1.53	2.83
South Gloucestershire	14,220	5,240	19,594	19,594	1.38	3.74
West of England LEP	40,590	16,740	76,237	76,237	1.88	4.55

	Total (all skills achievements including 'unknown' sector lead body)					
	Skills achievements - all ages	Skills achievements - under 19	Notified JCP vacancies	Inclusion estimate of notified or advertised vacancies	Vacancies per skills achievement (all ages)	Vacancies per skills achievemen t (under 19)
Bath and North East Somerset	11,720	6,190	11,303	11,303	0.96	1.83
Bristol, City of	40,070	22,210	34,334	34,334	0.86	1.55
North Somerset	18,540	13,230	11,006	11,006	0.59	0.83
South Gloucestershire	29,500	14,080	19,594	19,594	0.66	1.39
West of England LEP	99,830	55,710	76,237	76,237	0.76	1.37

Mayor's Education and Skills Commission Information and Advice on Jobs and Careers survey December 2013, initial findings

Bristol demographics and respondent profiles

Bristol Population Profile

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has estimated that 13.5% of the Bristol population is from Black and Minority Ethnic groups (BME). The ONS estimate of the percentage of young people aged 14 to 25 who are BME is 19%. The percentage of young people aged 14 to 19 years or 16 to 18 years who are BME is 22%. Diversity is projected to increase further: there are significant variations in BME populations in different areas of the city with diversity increasing most strongly in East Bristol.¹⁷

Survey respondents

There were a total of 271 respondents, the vast majority being aged 14-19 with 78% of those who answered the question being aged 16 to 18. As the survey was not promoted to university students, this demographic is in line with expectations. 64% of respondents were female, 36% male. Of those that answered the question, 78.4% described themselves as White British, 18.6% described themselves as either of Black and Minority Ethnic or Other White background (eg Eastern European). The total BME participation rate was 10.4%, this is below the estimated 19% BME population in the 14 – 25 year old age group.

Analysis of specific 'multiple' answers is included in the main body of the report below.

Population projections by broad age band for Bristol 2011-2021

Source: Interim 2011-based Sub-national Population Projections, Office for National Statistics

Change 2011-2021

Age	2011	2016	2021	number	%
0-15	78,700	81,900	86,900	8,200	10.4
16-24	66,000	71,200	68,100	2,100	3.2
25-49	163,300	173,700	185,000	21,700	13.3
50-64	64,000	66,500	70,100	6,200	9.7
65-74	27,900	31,500	32,300	4,400	15.7
75 and over	28,200	28,200	30,500	2,300	8.0
All ages	428,100	453,000	472,900	44,800	10.5

Summary and conclusions

There is considerable appetite for more information / advice on jobs and careers with 50% of respondents saying they would like more. 40% perceive they already access useful information, however a notable 10% perceive they don't. There is considerable overlap between the first category and the latter two.

¹⁷ JSNA 2012

Websites and family are the most strongly preferred sources of information and advice, and as such IAG providers should consider how to use these channels most effectively. It is not clear whether websites are being used for specific industry and jobs research or whether respondents are referring to dedicated careers guidance sites: this could be explored through a focus group should this be a priority for the Commission. Friends, teachers and careers advisors were also considered significant sources of information and advice, respondents however were less convinced they would use these sources than websites and family.

In terms of what is influencing young people's decision-making around careers, four considerations came out as highly or fairly important to the vast majority of question respondents: the respondent's skills, qualifications and aptitudes; available jobs / career opportunities; their interests; and a long held ambition. This suggests that the majority of respondents are engaging in a pragmatic analysis of their strengths and opportunities in the market place, combining these with 'internal' motivators. It is possible of course that respondents had not considered their motivators in this way before. It is worth emphasising that respondents' stated an interest in considering what jobs / career opportunities are available to influence their decision-making. This is at odds with statistics demonstrating an over and undersupply of people for specific careers, and suggests the problem could lie with a lack of information for young people. This should be explored further.

Of the other influences, current/past jobs/work experience and the cost of training / higher education came out as fairly important to the majority of question respondents, with these being highly important to a large number of the remaining respondents.

Overwhelmingly the key barriers / challenges respondents said they felt they faced were:

- Getting the right grades to help them with their next stage / overall career goals.
- The costs of higher education and a lack of understanding if/how it can be affordable.
- A perception that there are very few jobs available, let alone interesting jobs, and that young people are specifically disadvantaged due to their lack of work experience.

Other barriers / challenges were:

- A lack of understanding of areas that career guidance could help with, eg how to become what you want to become; the benefits vs costs of going to University; not knowing what to become etc.
- A perception of a need to develop one's personal skills including most notably a need to develop self-confidence, but also managing one's career (which has overlap with the above area), and developing 'people skills'.

Some respondents provided ideas which have potential mileage for the Commission including 'course tasters' at college, so prospective students could 'be more sure' before committing to a specific course; more help and advice for parents, possibly dedicated sessions run by schools/colleges; talks from industry on career options and advice.

One respondent's comment encapsulates a general theme of drive, pragmatism and the challenges felt that can be found more widely in the survey responses:

“All I can find are jobs in shops like Asda or Tesco which wouldn't give me the experience I would like to have for my future jobs. I would like to open my own clothing business in future therefore a part time job in a clothing retail company like Zara or Topshop would be very useful however in my opinion more "attractive" jobs aren't available for students (16-18 year olds).”

Question 1: is useful information or advice on jobs and careers available to you?

Key findings

Around half of all respondents would like more information / advice on jobs and careers. 40% perceive that they already access useful information or advice. Just over 10% perceive that they do not access useful information or advice: just under 10% don't know if they receive useful information or advice. A very small number don't want any information or advice. 30 people ticked two boxes or more, the vast majority of these wanting more information / advice:

- Yes; would like more: 17
- Yes; don't know: 1
- Would like more; don't know: 2
- No; would like more: 6
- No; would like more; don't know: 1
- No; don't want any: 2
- All answers: 1

	answered question		271
	skipped question		0
	Response Percent	Response Count	
Yes	42.1%	114	
Would like more	49.8%	135	
No	10.7%	29	
Don't want any	1.5%	4	
Don't know	8.5%	23	

Question 2: where do you currently get information and advice about jobs and careers?

Key findings

Consistent with answers to the previous question, 10% of respondents said they do not receive information or advice about jobs / careers. Out of the remaining 90% (242 respondents), 69% receive advice from family and 62% use websites. The next three most used sources were friends (45%), teachers (38%), careers advisors (32%). Social media was also relatively popular source at 23%. Other sources were significantly less popular. Answers provided under 'anywhere else' included the Going Places project, word of mouth and 'through college', shop windows, Careerscape, college library, colleagues and people "who work where I would like to". It is worth noting that Blast Off! is a new initiative and is known only to young people in specific years at specific schools. The reason it has been included here was to list as many known sources as possible, and potentially to provide useful feedback to the LEP regarding its current level of exposure.

	answered question	269
	skipped question	2
I don't get information or advice about jobs and careers	10.0%	27
family	62.1%	167
friends	40.5%	109
teachers	34.6%	93
careers advisors	28.6%	77
Blast Off! Future-You Future-Job	0.4%	1
recruitment agency	3.3%	9
JobCentre	10.0%	27
careers fairs	13.0%	35
websites	56.1%	151
social media	20.8%	56
apps	5.6%	15
	anywhere else? (please say)	13

Question 3: how likely are you to use the following to find out about jobs and careers in future?

Key findings

Actual behaviour is one of the strongest indicators of future behaviour, however it is useful to analyse stated actual behaviour alongside perceived future behaviour and the strength of commitment to specific sources, as is allowed by question 3, in order to determine effective IAG strategies.

The results imply that family is the most used / relied on source of support, with over 50% stating they would definitely use this source to find out about jobs and careers. Those that would 'definitely' and 'may' use family as a source totals 96% of all question respondents.

'Websites' scored highest as a 'definite' source of information and advice with a total of 58.6% question respondents choosing this option. 12% (32) of all respondents either skipped the question or stated they wouldn't use websites as a source of information or advice: 4% stated they wouldn't use websites. Unfortunately it is impossible to determine whether respondents are referring to dedicated IAG websites, specific employer websites, or more generic websites. Should it be a priority for the Commission to make a recommendation around targeting IAG, this would become an issue to explore in a focus group.

Friends, teachers, careers advisors and social media again all scored highly as sources for information and advice. The majority considered they would 'maybe' use them, and a significant minority stating they definitely would use these sources (33%, 28%, 35%, 26% respectively).

Recruitment agencies, job centres and careers fairs also all scored highly as 'maybe' would be used, however other respondents were more evenly split across the remaining three categories.

Around a quarter of question respondents said they would not use an app for information or advice, and around another quarter said they didn't know. However 36% said they might use an app while just 11% said they definitely would.

The Blast Off! results demonstrate that a lot of people don't know about the initiative, and that amongst those aware of it there is a stronger interest in using this as a source than has been demonstrated by actual behaviour to date.

	answered question				260
	skipped question				11
	definitely	maybe	not at all	don't know	Rating Count
family	52.2% (133)	43.5% (111)	3.1% (8)	1.2% (3)	255
friends	33.3% (83)	55.0% (137)	6.4% (16)	5.2% (13)	249
teachers	27.8% (69)	52.4% (130)	12.9% (32)	6.9% (17)	248
careers advisors	34.8% (86)	50.6% (125)	8.5% (21)	6.1% (15)	247
Blast Off! Future-You Future-Job	3.8% (9)	24.5% (58)	24.5% (58)	47.3% (112)	237
recruitment agency	12.9% (31)	37.1% (89)	19.2% (46)	30.8% (74)	240
JobCentre	18.7% (45)	44.8% (108)	18.7% (45)	17.8% (43)	241
careers fairs	15.2% (36)	48.1% (114)	15.2% (36)	21.5% (51)	237
websites	58.6% (146)	33.3% (83)	4.0% (10)	4.0% (10)	249
social media	26.2% (64)	47.5% (116)	13.9% (34)	12.3% (30)	244
apps	11.4% (27)	35.6% (84)	26.7% (63)	26.3% (62)	236
Anywhere else? (please say)					2

Question 4: how important are the following in helping you decide what job you want and/or what to do when you leave education?

Key findings

In terms of what is influencing young people's decision-making around careers, four considerations came out as highly important to the majority of question respondents, with each of these categories being fairly important to the majority of remaining respondents: the respondent's skills, qualifications and aptitudes; available jobs / career opportunities; their interests; and a long held ambition. This suggests that the majority of respondents are engaging in a mix of pragmatic analysis of their strengths, and opportunities in the market place, combined with 'internal' motivators. It is possible of course that they had not considered their motivators in this way before.

Of the other influences, current/past jobs/work experience and the cost of training / higher education came out as fairly important to the majority of question respondents, with these being highly important to a large number of the remaining respondents.

The opinion of family and the opinion of careers advisors were fairly important to the majority of question respondents. However almost the same number described family opinion as not at all important. The opinion of careers advisors was also stated as being not at all important by over a third of question respondents.

The remaining four categories: current / past jobs of my family / friends and opinion of my friends / teachers were thought not at all important to the majority of respondents. These were fairly important to a significant minority however (c 25 – 33%). It is worth noting that the number of respondents that 'didn't know' if these were important to them or not significantly increased for the categories involving others' opinions and current / past jobs of themselves, their family and/or friends. The media was given as another influence by the only respondent providing free text.

answered question					245
skipped question					26
	very important	fairly important	not at all important	not applicable / don't know	Rating Count
available jobs / career opportunities	57.9% (139)	37.5% (90)	2.1% (5)	2.5% (6)	240
current or past jobs / work experience	29.9% (72)	57.3% (138)	7.9% (19)	5.0% (12)	241
my interests	65.1% (157)	28.6% (69)	4.1% (10)	2.1% (5)	241
a long-held ambition	53.0% (125)	39.4% (93)	4.2% (10)	3.4% (8)	236
my skills, qualifications and aptitudes	64.9% (157)	29.8% (72)	3.7% (9)	1.7% (4)	242
cost of training or higher education	29.4% (70)	52.9% (126)	15.1% (36)	2.5% (6)	238
current or past jobs of my family	9.8% (23)	29.4% (69)	51.9% (122)	8.9% (21)	235
current or past jobs of friends	6.1% (14)	25.1% (58)	60.6% (140)	8.2% (19)	231
opinion of my family	14.5% (34)	39.6% (93)	38.7% (91)	7.2% (17)	235
opinion of my friends	4.3% (10)	32.9% (77)	55.1% (129)	7.7% (18)	234
opinion of teachers	9.0% (21)	39.5% (92)	43.8% (102)	7.7% (18)	233
opinion of careers advisors	12.4% (29)	43.8% (102)	34.8% (81)	9.0% (21)	233
Any other important influences? (please say what)					1

Question 5: when thinking about their future, people often see a number of challenges that they will need to deal with to succeed. When thinking about what you want to be, what challenges and barriers do you feel you face?

Key findings

More people (200 in total) answered this question than gave their name to be entered into the prize draw. Respondents varied from perceiving the challenges in front of them as steps to take on the road to success, to perceiving significant barriers that threaten to derail their dreams. EG:

- Doing my best and need to work hard to get where I want to be. Research more about working in a hotel. Talk to people that have experience and talk to friends and family and see what they are thinking.
- Trying my best within college and no matter how hard i try, not being good enough, ir not obtaining the right grades to get the job/place in UNI that i want.

Overwhelmingly the key barriers / challenges respondents said they faced were:

1. Getting the right grades to help them with their next stage / overall career goals.
2. The costs of higher education and a lack of understanding if/how it can be affordable.
3. A perception that there are very few jobs available, let alone interesting jobs, and that young people are specifically disadvantaged due to their lack of work experience.

And to a slightly lesser degree:

4. A lack of understanding of areas that career guidance could help with, eg how to become what you want to become; the benefits vs costs of going to University; not knowing what to become etc.
5. A perception of a need to develop one's personal skills including most notably a need to develop self-confidence, but also managing one's career (which has overlap with the above area), and developing 'people skills'.

Other areas raised included specific practical barriers such as transport, and a perception of prejudice – most notably amongst disabled respondents (4 of the 9 stated disabled respondents raised this as an issue).

One respondent articulated the key issues she felt she faced very clearly:

All I can find are jobs in shops like Asda or Tesco which wouldn't give me the experience I would like to have for my future jobs. I would like to open my own clothing business in future therefore a part time job in a clothing retail comany like Zara or Topshop would be very useful however in my opinion more "attractive" jobs arent available for students (16-18 year olds).

Ideas with potential mileage for the Commission:

- College could do tasters so you can be a bit more sure before you focus in on that one / pay for the course (respondent paraphrased).

- More concise help and advice for parents, in order for them to understand and assist children in their choice. Perhaps sessions run by colleges/schools to allow parents to understand what they can do to actively help.
- More information on my options of what I can do with my future, Maybe If we had people from the industry come in to college and talk about their experiences and what we can do to work to towards it and what other options we have.

Data analysis

The figures in brackets after each headline area refer to points made rather than the number of individuals that raised this as an area, as such are indicative only. Answers were categorised into the following:

Education (71)

Qualifications / passing exams / grades / academic requirements / academic skills for jobs: 64

Getting into uni/college (choosing right course, persevering with difficult course): 4

Number of years in education / amount of studying involved: 3

Money (59)

Money / financial barriers / worries (vast majority around uni/training, some business start up): 57

Better opportunities for scholarships for lower income applicants: 1

Lack of financial support for university leavers: 1

Studying and working at the same time: 1

Economic climate (78)

Stiff competition for jobs: 20

No (good) jobs on offer: 18

Lack of work experience: 14

Finding a job that interests me / uses my qualifications: 12

Reality of getting a job: 8

Learning skills needed to do the job: 4

Disillusionment with current economic climate: 2

Marketplace connections (8)

Lack of contacts: 5

Lack of response / feedback from employers: 2

Finding starting opportunity: 1

Guidance and support (44)

Lack of info (eg re: uni) and what difference will it make / lack of careers guidance / lack of understanding what I need to do to become what I want to become: 17

Not knowing what I want to be: 10

Having to narrow down choices: 4

Lack of time to invest in exploring careers: 3

Lack of learning resources (revision guides for some subjects and no access to right course eg BSL): 2

Lack of computer access / access to career tools: 2

Developing a good CV / other types of application: 2

Being assessed / interviewed: 1
Not knowing what I'm good at: 1
Not knowing how to support myself financially: 1
More concise help and advice for parents for them to help their children: 1

Personal skills (39)

Lack of confidence: both dealing with new challenging situations, and in 'being the best' in interviews etc: 15
Strategic management of career: (how to do well in a job, how to get foot in the door, succeed in chosen field): 7
People skills: 6
Better communication skills: 2
Emotionally demanding course: 1
Dealing with frustration effectively: 1
Not fitting in: 2
Lack of concentration, distractions / procrastination / interest: 5

'Structural' barriers (16)

Transport / transport costs: 7
Lack of jobs/training in the (local) area (and for some, little chance of moving): 5
How to have a family and a full-time career: 1
Business start up risks: 1
Hours spent working: 1

Perceived prejudice (8)

Being disabled (and others judgements): 4
Dyslexia: 1
Working class background: 1
Non-heterosexual orientation: 1
Different background from the one I aspire to work in: 1

Other (13)

Unsupportive family: 4
Difficulties emigrating / leaving area: 4
Being looked down on for one's choices: 2
Personal relationships: 2
Not enough support: 1

Questions 6 – 8

These questions were asked to explore whether respondents are securing work that is (a) drawing on their education / training suitably (b) whether they are working full-time if they would like to work full-time, as the Commission has been exploring. Unfortunately the numbers are so small they cannot be considered statistically significant.

Of those not in education and training and working, two were working full-time, three part-time. All of them wanted to work full time. Four of the five were working in roles related to their ambitions / education. Aged 17, 19, 21, 22, 24.

Of those not in education and training and not working, two wanted to work part-time (aged 19 and age not known), and the other did not state a preference (aged 15).

Of the 91 respondents in full-time education and working, one was working full-time, the other 90 part-time. 78 were working in an area not related to their qualifications / ambitions, 13 were.

Of the five in part-time education and working part-time, one person was working in an area related to their qualifications / ambitions (aged 16, 17, 18 x2, 19).

Questions 9 – 16

These questions were focused on equal opportunities.

‘Bristol – ambitious about fairness’

**A report from the Bristol Fairness Commission
June 2014**

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Foreword for the Mayor of Bristol



Last year I announced the establishment of a number of Mayoral Commissions in Bristol to look at key policy areas. Since this announcement we have set up a number of these Commissions, each one representing key priorities for the city, and specifically areas where we must do more to break down the barriers that risk holding us back from achieving our true potential. Addressing the issue of fairness is critically important, particularly in a city like Bristol that is prosperous on one hand, but at the same time masks but accentuates inequality in key parts of our City.

I asked Council officers to assemble a cast-list of some of the most knowledgeable and gifted individuals who could help advise us on each of these areas, and was delighted with the calibre of the people who were willing to give up their time and contribute so freely to the debate. We owe them a huge debt of gratitude.

I will now review the findings of the Commissions and consider them as part of the Council's policy making process. I have asked the appropriate Council officers to review the recommendations and advise on how we might implement them, giving due regard to financial, legal and other considerations. I will also ask the Council's Overview & Scrutiny function to advise my Cabinet and me on the recommendations. This draws in the perspectives of a wider cohort of Councillors representing all parts of the city – which is an opportunity to add further richness to the proposals coming forward.

Finally I would like to use this opportunity to thank each member of the Fairness Commission for their substantial contribution. I am confident this work will leave the city better prepared for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'George Ferguson'. The signature is stylized and fluid, with a large loop at the beginning and a long, sweeping tail.

George Ferguson

Mayor of Bristol

Introduction from the Chair – Alison Garnham, Chief Executive of the Child Poverty Action Group



Bristol is a great city, one that is prosperous and with a rich heritage of creativity, dynamism and innovation, but it also hides a different reality for growing numbers of its citizens – the tale of two cities. Bristol's prosperity is not shared by all, and like many cities, high rates of poverty, deprivation and inequality scar the prospects of many residents. They do not get the chances in life they deserve and everyone in Bristol is the poorer for this fact.

Bristol is also a young city, there are more children under 16 living in Bristol than people aged over 65, and compared to projections for the country as a whole, Bristol's projected growth profile is markedly younger. Add to this that, in 2013, it was estimated that 26.1% of children in Bristol live in poverty.

These factors are what interested me when I was invited to chair the Bristol Fairness Commission, that and the commitment expressed by the Mayor and the Council to seek to fundamentally change the game on inequality in the City by asking '*What kind of City do we want to be?*' and make a commitment to:

'Be a City that works together to reduce inequalities through significant improvement in the life chances for its citizens.'

With that and a fantastic mix of expertise and knowledge represented by the other members of the Commission and the witnesses we met, we have put together a report that seeks to highlight some key areas for change based on the request for us to:

- Recommend significant practical steps that can be 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 for Government where barriers exist to local implementation.

Our Commission, along with the others established here in Bristol have only had a limited time and resources to draw together our findings from a necessarily wide range of topics. This is just a first stage. Our recommendations would benefit from wide public consultation and public engagement. We will need Fairness Champions to ensure this agenda moves forward and that Fairness Principles are at the forefront when difficult spending decisions have to be made. With that in mind, we propose that alongside the delivery of the suggested recommendations, that a Fairness Alliance is established in the City to champion the report and support further information sharing and delivery.

We consciously tried not to overlap with the other commissions that were running concurrently, despite the fact that there are common concerns, for example, Young People's Education and Skills and Access to Affordable Homes are both relevant to the fairness agenda. Therefore, we have generally avoided commenting on those areas, although in the context of each of our key areas we have made some relevant points that we feel are important in the context of reducing inequality.

Bristol is taking an important step in recognising the benefits to all residents of giving people a fair chance in life and addressing the inequalities that persist in the UK today. Ultimately, national solutions are urgently needed to many of the issues we have raised and we have tried to make it clear where this is the case. But there are some things best addressed at the local level and Bristol has taken a brave first step in setting itself the fairness challenge. It is right to take this on, to be ambitious and to aim to be the fairest city in the UK. To succeed, this agenda will need buy-in and champions at all levels: in the council, in local organisations, in businesses and in communities – I look forward to continuing the dialogue about how this can be taken forward.

On behalf of the Commission I would like to thank everyone who gave time to share their knowledge and experiences with us, bringing the issues to life. We owe you, and we hope our suggestions will be able to help improve things. We are honoured to have had the chance to play our part in seeking to make a difference to the people of Bristol and we look forward to hearing their response.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alison Garnham', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Alison Garnham

Chair of Bristol Fairness Commission
Chief Executive of the Child Poverty Action Group.

Executive Summary

The Bristol Fairness Commission consisted of national and local experts that could offer some insight and expertise in the field of poverty, social exclusion, health and economic inequalities. The full membership is listed in appendix one. In addition, the Commission gathered evidence from local Officers, Councillors, and other experts in the field and local citizens who were directly affected by these issues of inequality, poverty and exclusion. They also told us their positive stories of useful support and the difference it had made, this is set out in appendix two.

The Commission would have liked to have done more, particularly in gathering local views and therefore see this report, not as the final stage in tackling very important issues, but one that will spark further debate and actions to address the issues raised. The issues of fairness and inequality cut across many areas, as other Fairness Commissions have found. We are conscious that continuing significant funding pressures upon the public sector and a still fragile economy make this a harder task still. This makes it even more critically important to optimise the funding and resources that do exist and focus them in areas that can have the biggest impact for the most vulnerable. We therefore call on the whole City of Bristol to gain a greater understanding of the pressures people are facing, think about the role each of you can play and how collectively you can work together to champion greater equality and demand a better and fairer future.

The Commission met six times between October 2013 and March 2014 and focused on three key areas: a young city, sharing prosperity and healthy communities. Here, we set out our ambitions for Bristol under five headings:

- The best place for children to grow up - a fair start in life
- Sharing prosperity - a fair place to live and work
- Fair Wages – a living wage for all
- Fairness for low-income families
- A happy, healthy city - fair and healthy communities

Our recommendations are listed below but you are encouraged to read the full context and learning points behind each one in the main report.

Key findings and recommendations – our ambition for Bristol

1. The best place for children to grow up - A fair start in life

Ambition one - Bristol is a young city and it should aim to be the best place for children to grow up. The Fairness Commission focused primarily on early years and childcare in Bristol to avoid overlap with the Young People's education and skills commission. What happens during pregnancy and during a child's first few years of life is crucial to a child's life chances. The Commission feels strongly that the City can't afford not to invest in children. **Bristol should brand itself as a young city with youthful ambition – with no child in Bristol left behind.**

Recommendations:

1. Community based early years services, including children's centres (targeted in key areas in particular) should continue to be a priority.
 - a. As part of this the Council should play a key role in ensuring that other services such as health services and Jobcentre plus provide added value in children's centres acting as community hubs
 - b. Effort is needed to encourage take-up of the children's centres and the free entitlement and further support and encouragement could be offered to parents to act as peer champions, particularly in areas where there is lower take-up of services.

2. Within three years, raise the percentage of children at a good level of development by age five to the level of the best in the country.
 - a. Review where Bristol stands on quality, making sure that children from the lowest income families gain access to the highest quality provision.
 - b. The Childcare Act 2006 requires local authorities to provide sufficient childcare for all parents who wish to work – review Bristol's performance in managing this duty and make improvements where necessary.
3. Focus also on older children, age 5-13 where there are often the biggest childcare gaps –e.g., around out of school and holiday childcare. Encourage schools to be seen as a local resource, getting maximum value out of facilities for the whole community, becoming truly extended schools. Engage the whole childcare sector in considering how this can be achieved, working with the PVI (private, voluntary and independent sector providers) where necessary.
 - a. As part of this priority and in recognition of the changing position brought about by the Children and Families Act, take the lead in exploring issues such as reading, meals classes for parents and volunteer and business sponsorship and support, particularly in schools in disadvantaged areas.
 - b. Break down barriers to schools being used as a community resource – including Private Finance Initiative (PFI) arrangements.
 - c. Ensure childcare is available for parents seeking to train or gain qualifications, including through further education (FE).
4. Poverty proof the school day by working with schools to ensure no child misses meals, uniforms, educational opportunities or trips due to lack of money.
 - a. Working with Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) partners and/or others ensure every school has a breakfast club.
 - b. Seek wider city support and funding to deliver Free School Meals (FSMs) in the school holidays, focussing first on the most disadvantaged communities.
5. Review learning from the London Challenge attainment gap project and new evidence about the important role of primary schools and apply to Bristol, from early years through to age 19. Engage academies and free schools in this task.
6. No NEETs - reduce the number and proportion of young people classified as NEET (Not in education, employment or training) to the level of best in the country, by engaging them individually in case work and providing mentors, apprenticeships, training and work experience or help them start a business of their own (as in Swansea).
7. Review services for children with special needs and strive to follow best practice demanding ambitious results from schools and special provision – aim to be the best.

Future landmark investments:

8. Increase the hours of the free entitlement to early years education for 2-4 year olds (following the example of London Borough of Camden)
9. Consider developing a local Educational Maintenance Allowance so more children from low-income families can contemplate staying on at school.
10. Extend free school meals to children over 7 and even to FE colleges. There are enormous benefits to be had from economies of scale, educational attainment and benefits to school culture when all sit down to eat the same meal.

Influencing national policy:

11. Lobby national government to provide more funding so that the Council can fully meet its responsibilities under the Childcare Act 2006, including providing sufficient childcare for

working parents; to be able to invest to ensure provision is all of high quality; and to fully roll out and meet the promise of fully extended schools.

12. Campaign for more money to expand early education and childcare; extended schools, free school meals and educational maintenance allowances.

2. Sharing prosperity - A fair place to live and work

Ambition two - Bristol is a wealthy city, with strong economic growth, vitality and enterprise. For those people and families who have suffered the most from the effects of recession and austerity, it is crucial now that they should be the first to share in the proceeds of growth, through the prioritisation of funds. For working families with children, life has become increasingly tough, and Bristol should aim to share their load to become the most family friendly city in the country. **A second ambition for Bristol, then, is around sharing prosperity – making Bristol the best place to live and work.**

Recommendations:

The Commission calls upon all employers in the City, including the Council and wider public sector to:

13. Review current policies and actions to consider where they miss opportunities to tackle disadvantage.
 - a. For the public sector use the development of a Social Value policy to ensure that the services that are commissioned and procured can improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area as part of the Public Services Social Value Act 2012.
 - b. For all employers include as part this; a review of access to work (transport), taking into account potential season ticket loans and other options such as expanding 'Wheels to Work' schemes, community/dedicated bus services and more other options such as flexible business hubs or home working.
14. Ensure that all those involved in the big city investments such as the arena, football stadium, enterprise zone and areas like South Bristol are playing a full part in addressing inequality in the City, from start (e.g. construction firms) to finish (e.g. access to employment).
 - a. In stimulating job creation, focus on getting employment for people in the poorest neighbourhoods either by bringing jobs to them, or taking them to jobs.
15. Work together to develop further understanding of and subsequently agree a Bristol Charter that could deliver part and full accreditation on:
 - a. Adopting a Living wage
 - b. Family friendly policy and practice
 - c. Avoidance of zero or low hour contracts wherever possible (precarious employment)
 - d. Adoption of the Workplace Health and Wellbeing charter.
16. Work together to enable an improved employment service/advice and guidance for adults, offering local control to enable greater matches in sustainable skills development and opportunities.
 - a. As part of this recognise first step routes into employment and skills development particularly for parents in long term disadvantaged communities, such as light touch, creative courses.
 - b. Make efforts to restore access to ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) courses for those furthest from the labour market.
17. Re-shape the draft City Employment and Enterprise Strategy – in particular, the gender, ethnic and disability implications need further acknowledgment, exploration and action planning – and

drive it forward. Include work around employment discrimination – on grounds of race, gender, disability, age and sexuality. Link into the work of the Trade Unions.

- a. Employers should through positive action, seek to increase the proportion of local people they employ from under-represented groups, such as: those from black and minority ethnic groups, women, disabled people and those from low-income parts of the city.
- b. Ensure all premises are DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) compliant and that there are employment opportunities for disabled people.

Parental employment:

18. The Council to lead by example and work with other employers in the city to ensure that more decent part-time, job share and family-friendly employment is available locally, including through becoming a 'Timewise' Council and reviewing opportunities as part of procurement and commissioning.

- a. Consider tailored support for parents, as part of recommendation 18, above.

19. Include the drive for family-friendly jobs in the same way as for Living Wage jobs (perhaps initiating a 'making Bristol work for parents' coalition/campaign).

20. Initiate research and action on the gender pay gap in Bristol linking this to the work of the trades unions and Bristol Women's Commission, as above.

Future landmark investments:

21. Enable Bristol to test and develop an enhanced employment support service for adults in Bristol, building on good local examples, such as the Ready for Work scheme provided by Business in the Community (BITC).

- a. Continue to focus on transport access to work schemes as highlighted above and with particular acknowledgement to the difficulties faced by those in South Bristol.

Influencing national policy:

22. Argue for the devolution of funding for employment support down to local authority level.

3. Fair Wages – a living wage for all

Ambition three - The Commission supports the Council's commitment to become a living wage employer itself and firmly believes that it has to lead by example if it is to expect others to adopt it too. No-one in Bristol should do a hard day's work for less than they can afford to live on. **Bristol should aim to become a leading living wage city.**

Recommendations:

23. Bristol City Council should aim to become a fully accredited Living Wage Employer, first with staff and then working through procurement, contracting and best value policies to raise awareness and understanding of the benefits of it with contracted services before implementing this requirement over time (at scheduled contract renewal points).

- a. Review the use of agency staff at the Council and use any savings made, through avoiding top-up charges, to help support the costs of a Living Wage.
- b. Work with and support Business West and the Trades Union Congress (TUC) as part of their joint declaration to promote the benefits of the Living Wage with other city employers and businesses (large and small), including the NHS, Universities, and the Voluntary and Community Sector Set up a Bristol Living Wage Joint-planning Board to deliver the above and for the City to provide an annual report on progress towards becoming a Fair Pay City.

- 24.** Request all major employers and all who tender for Council contracts publish pay differentials so they are open to scrutiny. The Council should aim for a ratio of no more than 10:1 within three years.

Social partnership:

- 25.** Prioritise sustainable economic growth that maximises opportunities and benefits all people, including the most disadvantaged and ensure better quality jobs are available to the most disadvantaged so all share in any growth, bringing increased spending into local communities.
- a. Invite Business West and other employer umbrella bodies in the City to help businesses better understand precarious employment and its impact on household income. This should include the rise in zero hours' contracts, particularly in the care sector, and the implications for staff and clients.
 - b. Consider ways to help boost earnings in the city through employment support, skills development and employee engagement. Welcome the positive role of trade unions.
 - c. Consider, with partners, how to help employers honour and government enforce the National Minimum Wage.

Influencing national policy:

- 26.** As a first step on the issue of sustainable employment, engage with government to improve the level of the National Minimum Wage, working as part of the National Social Inclusion network.
- 27.** Argue for any benefit savings made as a consequence of paying the living wage to be used to improve the level of child and working tax credits and, in future, universal credit to low income working families.

4. Fairness for low income families

Ambition four - The poorest people have taken the biggest hit as key in-work and out-of-work benefits have been cut, particularly women, disabled people and families with young children. The impact is visible in Bristol with, amongst other things, the growth of food banks. Bristol needs to take action to help them.

Recommendations:

- 28.** Continue to support and promote local help and advice agencies, encouraging outreach and promotional activity – particularly around money advice and welfare rights advice – which could help bring money into poorer areas and encourage take-up of unclaimed benefits and tax credits, including council discretionary payments.
- a. Maintain level of Welfare Rights and Money Advice Service (WRAMAS) free training for all support agencies, Bristol City Council (BCC) staff and partners and ensure customers get good benefits information, advice and assistance where this is part of the job role –e.g., social workers.
 - b. Approach the Health and Wellbeing Board to discuss the health impact of rising inequality and falling family incomes and the local experience of welfare reform.
 - c. Invite the local branch of NHS England in dialogue with GP Commissioners to seek to end the practice of charging for medical certificates and letters in connection with benefit claims. As a first step, seek to establish a standard agreement across Bristol as to what a supporting medical letter should cost.
- 29.** Prioritise and secure funding through for a local welfare assistance scheme, even after earmarked Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) funding ends in 2015. Aim to be among the best in the country for paying cash grants and having a formal review process, as in Scotland.
- 30.** Work together across the city to recognise the value of the local credit unions and the support they can offer to disadvantaged communities:

- a. Develop a city campaign to get more staff across a range of organisations and other residents to support local credit unions (and therefore people on lower incomes) by having accounts with them and help pump prime their work.
 - b. Explore giving young people in contact with local services a first bank account with the credit union to promote understanding of good money management.
- 31.** Continue to explore ways to discourage pay day lending and borrowing in Bristol, particularly in the most disadvantaged areas and maintain enforcement action against illegal activity by loan sharks who prey on vulnerable residents).
- 32.** Work together across the City to support the development of key facilities including pop up services within communities to encourage local employment, spend and access to services (free cashpoints, local supermarkets that meet local need and support healthy priorities, easy online access.) Equally use planning 'use' classes more creatively to discourage pay day loans and betting shops from stripping money out of deprived communities.
- 33.** End food deserts - support alternative or community supermarkets using local suppliers. And work to end the poverty premium paid by low-income residents who tend to pay more for food, fuel and other items by, for example, encouraging low cost food stores.
- 34.** Support research to identify the reasons why so many of Bristol's residents are using Food Banks and establish a model of best practice for all food bank providers. Use the findings to coordinate a local response to include work with relevant local agencies.
- 35.** Work with local DWP and Jobcentre plus representatives and engage on a strategic level through the national social exclusion network to address inappropriate and inflexible benefit sanctions that can send citizens spiralling into crisis.
- 36.** Work together across the City to end the digital divide. Provide local access and training on IT in libraries, advice centres and community centres, plus continue to help to access a computer through the re-use scheme so local people are not cut off from key services –e.g., claiming benefits, accessing financial services or applying for jobs.

Future landmark investments:

- 37.** Continue to make up the 10% shortfall in Council Tax Reduction Schemes funding for non-pensioner households.

Influencing national policy:

- 38.** Campaign for continued funding for local welfare assistance and discretionary housing schemes.
- 39.** Campaign to make it a recognised part of GPs role to provide evidence in relation to benefit claims and make it unlawful in the NHS to charge for sick notes, letters and reports in connection with benefit claims.

5. Fair and healthy communities – a happy, healthy city

Ambition five – Continue to listen to and learn from Bristol's vibrant yet disadvantaged communities, so badly hit by austerity. Invest in them and their local infrastructure. Make Bristol a happy, healthy city.

Recommendations:

- 40.** To support Bristol's Child Health in particular we need to:
- a. To protect children, continue to promote and prioritise traffic calming, 20 mile an hour limits and green zones in the most disadvantaged areas.
 - b. Protect and maximise opportunities to access local green, safe and attractive spaces, including converting patches of scrubland space for community use.
 - c. Support food growing initiatives for health and recreational benefits including those such as community orchards.
 - d. Avoid fast food outlets near schools (by using planning laws effectively).

- e. The Commission supports the Sports Commission recommendations to seek opportunities and agreement with sports facilities owners and operators, including schools, to unlock facilities for extended use by clubs and communities.
 - f. Target awareness raising of child health and social isolation issues, especially in cluster areas.
 - g. Review community assets for those areas and identify opportunities for use such as community kitchens.
 - h. Support pro-active health measures including delivery of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy which contains 10 priorities for action;¹ and social prescribing activities through GPs.
- 41.** Poverty and fear of crime can lead to greater levels of social isolation in neighbourhoods, therefore work with key agencies to address this including through the active citizen agenda and forthcoming Cities of Service Volunteering programme.
- a. Invite neighbourhood police to work closely with older and disabled groups.
 - b. Encourage local good neighbour schemes to reduce social isolation and build community spirit.
 - c. Continue to act on domestic violence with agencies working together to ensure accessible services and a swift response. This should include a review of support services to Children and Young People affected by domestic violence in their homes and that these factors are considered as part of any re-commissioning process.
 - d. Research the local impact of stop and search on communities and work with them to find alternative methods of policing.
- 42.** Local grassroots organisations are essential to the success of Bristol, know the communities and their needs, and are approachable/accessible to local people. Seek support from across the City to help fund, encourage and enable local VCS groups to thrive and to deliver services to Bristol communities where they align to City priorities.
- a. Continue to engage with local communities in thinking about how to share community assets – sharing resources between the council, statutory and voluntary providers, to include: buildings, training, IT systems and support. Community assets could be made available first to local community organisations before they are considered for other uses or sold off commercially.
 - b. Explore potential quick wins through reinvesting effort from established Compact work into supporting Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations that focus on supporting people in disadvantaged communities with their fundraising and bid writing skills
 - c. Continue to work with the VCSE sector to make commissioning processes accessible and address barriers e.g. financial thresholds that small groups cannot comply with other models such as the possibility of competitive grants as a purchasing option.
 - d. Build social value issues into the commissioning process and have early dialogue with potential providers about these types of issues and their commitment to them e.g. living wage, employing local people, recruiting local volunteers
- 43.** Seek to increase the number of people seeking support for depression and anxiety, particularly in areas of high unemployment and child poverty through linking up health initiatives with advice and support services.
- 44.** On transport: Community transport provision needs to include access to health appointments – Work with the Health & Wellbeing board to address this.
- 45.** On housing: The Commission encourages landlords and house builders to work together on the implementation of the affordable housing strategy.

¹ These are: To create a high quality green and built environment; Achieve a healthier, more sustainable and resilient food system; To reduce all forms of domestic, gender and racially based violence and abuse; Reduce smoking prevalence and illicit tobacco availability and increase smoke free areas; Reduce the harm caused by alcohol misuse; To give children the best start in life; Improve mental wellbeing and reduce social isolation; To better meet the needs of people with dementia and provide dementia friendly environments; To improve the clinical quality of and satisfaction with maternity services; and Improve services and care through better integrated care and support.

Future landmark investments:

- 46.** Continue the good work in reducing bus fares and, at some point, consider introducing free bus fares for children and young people under 25.
- 47.** Leverage new money for affordable, social housing developments.

Influencing national policy:

- 48.** Argue for more flexibility in raising local funds for social housing and transport developments.

Moving forward - adopting Fairness Principles

As Fairness is a cross cutting issue, both within the Council, its partners and across the city the Commission would like to recommend:

49. The establishment, within six months of the Mayor's formal response to this report, of a Fairness Alliance to continue to work together across the City

- a. This could include one or two key meetings a year to consider issues and agree joint-working, share good practice and seek to work together to resolve issues;
- b. Promotion and encouragement of corporate social responsibility, making local citizens and organisations aware that inequality damages us all, seeking to dispel myths about the causes of poverty and inviting local action through sponsorship, corporate responsibility and active volunteering;
- c. To develop and action plan with metrics to measure progress; and
- d. Both the Council and the Fairness Alliance to report back to Cabinet after 12 months.

50. Adopting these Fairness principles for the City of Bristol:

Harness the creativity, entrepreneurialism and ingenuity of the people of Bristol to the project of greater fairness – leverage Bristol's regional strengths and its cultural and business sectors.

Act on good data - measure, analyse and understand income inequality in Bristol and share the information widely so that the causes and possible solutions can be considered.

Engage in a Bristol-wide conversation about inequality, the damage it does and how to reduce it, engaging directly with disadvantaged neighbourhoods and communities and making sure that better off Bristolians are aware that inequality affects them too.

Engage the community at every level – do things with people and not just for them.

Make reducing income inequality a core value in decision making.

Adopt a long term view and a preventative approach that acts now to prevent bigger problems in the future.

Strive for excellence in Bristol's services and organisations and the way they work together – strive for 'one-door' to give access to all services.

Lead by example by, for example, by being the best employer in Bristol and by paying the Living Wage to Council employees and spread new approaches using the Council's supply chain.

Welcome the positive role of trade unions, corporate social responsibility and other civil society and voluntary sector groups.

Pay particular attention to families with children, their earning power, their children's development and service needs to enable them to live free from poverty and improve the life chances of their young people.

Ensure the proceeds of growth are shared fairly, prioritising investments and services to reduce inequalities and improve life chances for the most disadvantaged people and in the most disadvantaged communities.

Don't assume poor incomes and inadequately rewarded work are somehow inevitable – they are an injustice that deserves redress.

Don't let lack of city funds mean opportunities for creativity and hope are missed.

Key findings and recommendations – our ambition for Bristol

1. A Fair Start in Life – the best place for children to grow up

Ambition one - Bristol is a young city and it should aim to be the best place for children to grow up. The Fairness Commission focused primarily on early years and childcare in Bristol to avoid overlap with the Young People's education and skills commission. What happens during pregnancy and during a child's first few years of life is crucial to a child's life chances. The Commission feels strongly that the City can't afford not to invest in children. Bristol should brand itself as a young city with youthful ambition – with no child in Bristol left behind.

The Commission is aware that the pressure on Bristol with a large and growing young population (27% increase in the number of children aged birth to four since 2006 and an increasingly diverse population) is challenging, particularly against a backdrop of intense resource pressures. However with a figure of 26.1% of children living in poverty the Council's role is critical, both directly and in bringing together all the relevant organisations and agencies to improve children's life chances.

The current statutory entitlement for 3 & 4 year olds (and most disadvantaged 2 year olds) is good and most do take it up but it varies across different parts of city. In north and south Bristol there is approximately 96% take-up, but in central and eastern parts this drops to approx. 87%. The Commission is aware that options to address this are being considered and seeks to encourage this, including through the use of peer champions to highlight the benefits to others and encourage wider support within the community.

High quality early childhood education and childcare can deliver improved child outcomes in later life and there is strong evidence to support this from many key studies including the Marmot report (2010) and DfES EPPE project report (2004).² The positive effects are the most long-lasting for the most disadvantaged children - but only if provision is of high quality and this tends to be worst in the most disadvantaged areas.³ This needs to be addressed. Also, the lack of high quality, affordable childcare is a serious barrier to parents being able to work and keep their families out of poverty.

The recent Children and Families Act 2014 seeks to reform the system of early education and childcare by opening it up and making it more flexible. Whilst greater flexibility and encouragement of a greater role for schools is welcomed, there is also concern from the Commission and early years staff about the deregulation of the sector and whether this will affect the quality of childcare. The best quality is often to be found in the maintained sector and in children's centres;⁴ therefore, provision based on this high quality, graduate-led model is needed if children are to achieve the best outcomes. The Commission would be keen for greater dialogue in the sector to ensure good practice is shared across the City. The Council and its partners need to take the issue of childcare quality extremely seriously and a coordinated effort is needed to ensure that particularly children from low-income families gain access to only the highest quality of provision.

² Marmot M (2010) *Fair Society, healthy Lives*, Strategic Review of health inequalities in England post- 2010, London: UCL; Sylva, K., Melhuish, E., Sammons, P., Siraj-Baltchford, I. And Taggart, B (2004) *The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) Project: Final report – a longitudinal study funded by the DfES 1997-2004*, Sure Start Research Report, SSU/FR/2004/01, Nottingham: DCSF.

³ Ofsted (2014) *The report of her majesty's chief inspector of education children's services and skills*; Manchester: OFSTED

Nuffield Foundation, Mathers S and Smees R (2014) 'Quality and Inequality - Do three and four-year-olds in deprived areas experience lower quality early years provision?'

⁴ Sylva K et al (2004) Op cit; Mathers, S., Sylva, K. and Joshi, H. (2007) *Quality of Childcare Settings in the Millennium Cohort Study*. Department for Education and Skills: London; Smith, T., Coxon, K., Sigala, M., Sylva, K., Mathers. S., La Valle, I., Smith, R., Purdon, S., Dearden, L., Shaw, J. and Sibieta, L. (2007) *National Evaluation of the Neighbourhood Nurseries Initiative Integrated Report*, London: DfES.

Meeting with parents and early years professionals and those working in partnership with them (such as adult learning and skills) in local Children's Centres was inspiring and there was clear evidence of excellent practice. However it is clear that with limited resources they need help to go further. In particular, there needs to be a clear focus on getting a good level of development by age five for more children.

The Commission is aware of the review work that has been taking place around the 25 children's centres and is keen to support the principle of the centres, where based to have greatest impact, acting as vibrant community hubs for young families. By embedding them in communities with the added value of other services and resources being available, including follow on school support and before and after school childcare. This can offer more holistic, shared support to children and their parents. Bristol should aim for seamless integrated services that focus on improved outcomes as well as confidence building and support for parental employment. Local authorities already have duties under the Childcare Act 2006 to ensure there is sufficient childcare available for all parents wanting to take paid work and the Commission was anxious to find ways to help them operationalise this requirement.

Currently the Commission is aware that funding challenges include the reduction of support through the health service and employment support from Jobcentre plus. And some of the biggest gaps in childcare provision are for school-age children, disabled children and for parents working atypical hours. So, there is a strong case for making good use of existing resources. Schools, for example, are a local resource and the council could take a lead in coordinating local action, involving schools, public sector, voluntary sector and employers to increase the amount of affordable, high quality childcare available through fully integrated, extended schools provision. This way local people would get maximum value out of school facilities for the local community, including out of school art, study and evening classes for local parents. Bristol should engage the whole childcare sector and community in considering how this can be achieved.

Consideration should be given to finding ways to 'poverty proof' the school day. Children from low-income families often lack money to pay for school uniforms, school trips or even to choose the subjects they prefer because they cannot afford necessary equipment or books that may be a course requirement or expectation. Stigma surrounding free school meals, low take-up and children often arriving at school hungry are becoming more common. And there is no meals provision to cover school holidays. Some of these issues can be tackled at school level with local funds being set up to cover these costs – no child should be excluded from an enriching educational experience due to lack of money, or humiliated due to stigmatising school meals practice. Consideration needs to be given to providing free 'school' meals during holiday periods, with a focus first on schools based within the most disadvantaged areas.

Finally, in order to continue the good start initiated through early years work, Bristol should seek to be a leader in closing the educational attainment gap. The London Challenge has shown that it is possible to make dramatic improvements in the gap between the school achievements of low income children and their better-off peers. It is suggested Bristol schools take the learning from this and use it to support other work already underway. Also, by providing individual case work and mentoring (following the example of Swansea), the number and proportion of young people defined as NEET (Not in education, employment or training) could be reduced.

Recommendations:

1. Community based early years services, including children's centres (targeted in key areas in particular) should continue to be a priority.
 - a. As part of this the Council should play a key role in ensuring that other services such as health services and Jobcentre plus provide added value in children's centres acting as community hubs

- b. Effort is needed to encourage take-up of the children's centres and the free entitlement and further support and encouragement could be offered to parents to act as peer champions, particularly in areas where there is lower take-up of services.
2. Within three years, raise the percentage of children at a good level of development by age five to the level of the best in the country.
 - a. Review where Bristol stands on quality, making sure that children from the lowest income families gain access to the highest quality provision.
 - b. The Childcare Act 2006 requires local authorities to provide sufficient childcare for all parents who wish to work – review Bristol's performance in managing this duty and make improvements where necessary.
3. Focus also on older children, age 5-13 where there are often the biggest childcare gaps – e.g., around out of school and holiday childcare. Encourage schools to be seen as a local resource, getting maximum value out of facilities for the whole community, becoming truly extended schools. Engage the whole childcare sector in considering how this can be achieved, working with the PVI (private, voluntary and independent sector providers) where necessary.
 - a. As part of this priority and in recognition of the changing position brought about by the Children and Families Act, take the lead in exploring issues such as reading, meals classes for parents and volunteer and business sponsorship and support, particularly in schools in disadvantaged areas.
 - b. Break down barriers to schools being used as a community resource – including Private Finance Initiative (PFI) arrangements.
 - c. Ensure childcare is available for parents seeking to train or gain qualifications, including through further education (FE).
4. Poverty proof the school day by working with schools to ensure no child misses meals, uniforms, educational opportunities or trips due to lack of money.
 - a. Working with Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) partners and/or others ensure every school has a breakfast club.
 - b. Seek wider city support and funding to deliver free school meals (FSMs) in the school holidays, focussing first on the most disadvantaged communities.
5. Review learning from the London Challenge attainment gap project and new evidence about the important role of primary schools and apply to Bristol, from early years through to age 19. Engage academies and free schools in this task.
6. No NEETs - reduce the number and proportion of young people classified as NEET (Not in education, employment or training) to the level of best in the country, by engaging them individually in case work and providing mentors, apprenticeships, training and work experience or help them start a business of their own (as in Swansea).
7. Review services for children with special needs and strive to follow best practice demanding ambitious results from schools and special provision – aim to be the best.

Future landmark investments:

8. Increase the hours of the free entitlement to early years education for 2-4 year olds (following the example of the London Borough of Camden)
9. Consider developing a local Educational Maintenance Allowance so more children from low-income families can contemplate staying on at school.
10. Extend free school meals to children over 7 and even to FE colleges. There are enormous benefits to be had from economies of scale, educational attainment and benefits to school culture when all sit down to eat the same meal.

Influencing national policy:

11. Lobby national government to provide more funding so that the Council can fully meet its responsibilities under the Childcare Act 2006, including providing sufficient childcare for working parents; to be able to invest to ensure provision is all of high quality; and to fully roll out and meet the promise of fully extended schools.

12. Campaign for more money to expand early education and childcare; extended schools, free school meals and educational maintenance allowances.

2. A Fair place to live and work – sharing prosperity

Ambition two - Bristol is a wealthy city, with strong economic growth, vitality and enterprise. For those people and families who have suffered the most from the effects of recession and austerity, it is crucial now that they should be the first to share in the proceeds of growth, through the prioritisation of funds. For working families with children, life has become increasingly tough, and Bristol should aim to share their load to become the most family-friendly city in the country. A second ambition for Bristol, then, is around sharing prosperity – making Bristol the best place to live and work.

As highlighted in the introduction from the Commission Chair, Bristol has been and continues to be strong on economic growth. Indeed the March Bristol Economic Briefing advises:

*'Reports from three different sources have suggested that the economy of Bristol is on the road to recovery. One indicates the commercial property market in Bristol will bounce back strongly in 2014. Another - the Cities Outlook 2014 indicated that Bristol is one of the strongest performing major English cities outside London. Another suggests that Bristol will undergo "significant" economic expansion over the next five years. The growth will be led, in tandem, by the city's relatively new information and communications technology (ICT) and well established professional, scientific and technical services sectors. In addition, the city's emerging creative and media industry will make a significant contribution.'*⁵

Currently Bristol outperforms in a number of key areas:

- Economic productivity (Gross Value Added) £28.70 per hour (UK av. £27.30)
- 7.2% unemployment rate (UK av. 7.9%)
- 82% feel in good health (81.2% in E&W)
- Average earnings £27,100 (UK av. £26,400)
- 42.2% qualified to degree level (UK av. 32.5%)

This means for parts of the City and neighbouring areas life is good, despite the recent economic pressures.

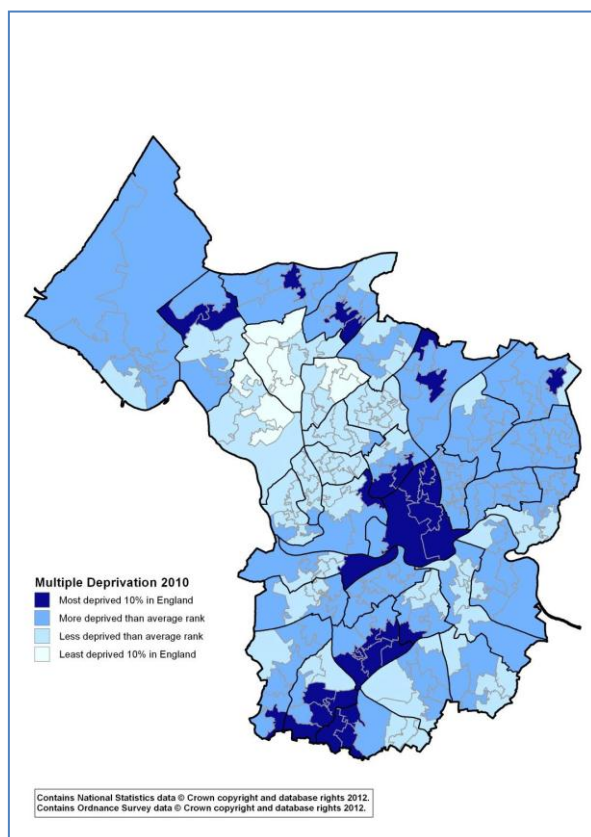
However, reports like the JRF's 'Cities, Growth and Poverty: Evidence review' (2014)⁶ points out that: *'Economic growth does not always reduce poverty... The benefits of growth in innovative, knowledge based sectors will not automatically trickle down to households in poverty.'*

This is borne out in Bristol with some areas facing persistent deprivation, with some of these areas being placed within the 10% most deprived in England. 14 of Bristol's Local Super Output Areas are in the most deprived 5% and one area – Hareclive in Whitchurch Park falls within the most deprived 1%. There are approximately 63,000 people living in deprived areas (15% of all Bristol residents). The main clusters tend to be in the inner city or on outer local authority estates.

⁵ Extract from Bristol City Council Economic briefing March 2014 <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/page/business/economic-information-and-analysis>

⁶ Lee N, Sissons P, Hughes C, Green A, Atfield G, Adam D, Rodriguez-Pose (2014) *Cities, Growth and poverty: a review of the evidence*, York:JRF.

This picture of Bristol highlights the areas with highest levels of multiple deprivation. (Darkest areas)



The Council is well-aware of this issue (and was one of the grounds for establishing the Commission) and is working hard at a local neighbourhood level and at a strategic level, with the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), with Government on developing City Deals (stage one already completed) and now Growth Deals as part of the Single Local Growth fund and through EU Structural and Investment funds.

Therefore the work of the Commission has sought to review the local and national evidence on this issue (within the time available) and provide independent comment and recommendations where it feels the greatest priorities and opportunities lie.

Supporting sustainable and wide-reaching economic growth

The Commission supports the view expressed in the previously referenced JRF report that: *'The impact of employment growth on poverty depends upon the sector of new employment, its quality, the characteristics of the population and local factors such as the quality of transport links.'*

Further: *'A balance and range of skills is particularly important in both ensuring urban economic growth and reducing poverty. Low and Intermediate-level skills and the quality of entry level jobs should be considered integral to developing a sustainable urban economy.'*

In the case of Bristol the strong and growing sectors of the economy will naturally attract employers seeking highly skilled individuals; this therefore tends to support the high level of graduates in the city and attract others from outside the immediate Bristol boundary (the wider functioning economic area).

Whilst this is recognised as good for the economic growth within the wider area, the commission feel there is scope to do more to develop the employability and skills of those within more deprived areas and engage further with employers to develop more entry level jobs (including traineeships and apprenticeships).

The Commission is aware that work on some sectors in particular has already started in this regard, such as the Temple Quarter Enterprise Zone and its focus on supporting skills development in the Creative and Digital sectors and small business start-ups.

Professor Richard Wilkinson, in the book he co-authored with Kate Pickett *'The Spirit Level – Why Equality is better for everyone'*, makes the case that *'sustainability needs greater equality'*, citing evidence that where places are unequal (particularly in income) it leads to deteriorations in health, social relations and human capital. Also that where adults experience inequality, the effects are passed on to children. Therefore in terms of focusing on key groups, Bristol needs to look not only to geographical areas but also particularly to young parents and women in particular who are within low/no income groups. Increasingly it is working households that are suffering from 'in-work' poverty due to range of factors including reduced or low hours, changes to in-work benefit entitlements and rising cost of living.

Parental employment

Where family incomes have risen at all over the past 30 years, this has come mainly from second earners. Work is needed to ensure Bristol is somewhere that facilitates second earners' (usually mothers') employment in particular. To achieve this it requires more, decently paid, family-friendly jobs, decent childcare and flexible transport.

The impact of parental employment is clear from our national poverty figures. If both parents are in paid work, child poverty rates reduce quite dramatically:⁷

- Couple not working – 69%
- One or more parents working part time – 59%
- One parent working full time – 30%
- One working full-time and one working part time – 10%
- Both working full time – 5%

The returns from paid work are not quite so good for lone parents, reducing from 65% when not in paid work to only 31% in part-time work and 17% full-time. The self-employed still have a 29% child poverty rate in work. Bristol's existing Child Poverty Strategy (2012) highlights that an unusually high proportion of Bristol's children in poverty (75.5%) live in lone parent families, compared with 67.4% in core cities and 68.2% in England as a whole. (Lawrence Hill (1,750) and Filwood (1,270) have the greatest numbers). Of those the data shows that 92% of lone parents are women and that the recession and public sector cuts are disproportionately affecting women (as a large part of that workforce).

The 2011 report 'Single Mothers, Singled Out' (Fawcett/Institute of Fiscal studies) anticipates that lone mothers will experience an 8.5% drop in real income by 2015.

Over half of our children in poverty live in households where the youngest child is under the age of five. Again, Bristol has relatively more children in this category than any of its comparator areas.

The level of pay, the number of hours, or jobs to achieve a reasonable wage and job security are also key factors. A third of adult life is spent at work so good quality work is a major contributor to health and wellbeing. Conversely, insecure and poor quality work has a negative impact on both physical and mental health.

The recent Resolution Foundation report *'Careers and Carers'* found that nationally approx. 1 million women are 'missing' from the UK labour market. The biggest gap is mothers with children under 5. Full-time work is a big issue. In their research with 'Mumsnet', they discovered 1 in 5 working mothers wanted to work more. For non-working mothers 4 in 10 wanted to work more. Affordability was sighted as the biggest barrier for both groups. Many found that working part time meant they had to take a lower skilled job on lower pay. For those on low pay it can be harder to

⁷ DWP/ONS (2013) *Households Below Average Income, 1995/95 – 2011/12*, London: DWP

progress. The minimum wage has become a 'going rate' in some sectors rather than the minimum. Some move out of low pay, but other factors can cause them to fall back into it.

The Commission found a number of employers now commonly employ people on fewer than 16 hours (the threshold for working tax credit), such as 10 hours or zero hours contracts, often meaning that people need to look at trying to do more than one job and juggling the hours and commitments of each to get any help through tax credits, including help with childcare costs. The Resolution Foundation report found that 23 hours plus are more viable for many.

Increasingly, conditionality in claiming benefits is also causing difficulty. Examples include a lack of flexibility in the system to cope with varying hours of employment, which is common in seasonal work. People must also accept work within a 90 minute commute, but this can be difficult for parents on low incomes who often rely on public transport to get to work but need flexibility to support their children in school or childcare.

The UK prides itself on having a flexible labour market, but there is less flexibility for employees, particularly parents, who have little choice over their hours, including anti-social hours at evenings and weekends. So there is a need to work with employers to recognise the issues and support more employee-friendly and family-friendly work practices at a local and national level to realise more sustainable employment practice. In particular, the city should work with employers to promote well paid part time working opportunities.

Dialogue with parents from local children's centres highlighted the benefit of targeted learning support for them as individuals and the benefit this then had on their children too. Introductory lighter touch courses that get people used to learning environments are key as a gateway onto other more formalised learning. Parenting courses were also really helpful to grow confidence. By growing their confidence and self-esteem, they were also able to realise that they already had existing transferable skills.

Crèche facilities and peer to peer support was also highly valued, particularly where there is no other family support. Each of the parents the Commission spoke to were now actively promoting the benefits to others and aware that in many cases it offered general improved health and wellbeing and access to other social engagement activities.

Local and national policy levers

As highlighted at the beginning of this section the Commission recognise the significant efforts already being made by the Council to address inequality in the City.

The recent commitment by the Mayor to join the new national social inclusion network initiated by Birmingham and that brings together those authorities that have made a commitment to promoting Fairness and Social inclusion is to be welcomed (March 2014). It will enable Bristol to learn and share information about tools and strategies that are working to address the issues identified and bring together a strong and collective voice particularly where the issue is affected by national policy.

At a local level, the Commission considers that the Council should seek to lead by example, for example in HR and Procurement practice, but also make best use of its enabling local leadership role to encourage others to do the same across the City. The Council is also in the process of developing an Employment and Enterprise Strategy that will describe in detail many of the key activities to support economic growth and inclusion for local citizens, individually, through commissioned services or in partnership with others.

The Fairness Commission has therefore contributed to its development, alongside that of the Young People's Education and Skills Commission and welcomes the overall adoption of the strategy to bring together a focused effort to address this agenda.

The key messages were around the need to strengthen the sections that seek to tackle economic exclusion on grounds of gender, black and minority ethnic group and disability. In addition, consideration of parental employment and barriers to in-work progression needed to be addressed.

The Commission feels that the current local delivery of **employment advice** services could be strengthened. Jobcentre plus in particular is considered to focus on short term solutions rather than longer term sustainable employment directions. Opportunities for better careers advice and skills development for adults that matches the growing market would be helpful. Dedicated services for parents, along the lines of the 'Timewise' approach pioneered by Women Like Us in London could be adopted.

Case study: Camden Council has become the first local authority to achieve the Timewise Council status. It forms part of Camden's wider plan to help mothers balance work with childcare. The Timewise Foundation, which runs the scheme, champions flexible working and operates the UK's leading jobsite that offers high-quality part-time roles to the people who need and can fill them.

The Commission would like to see more local influence on work programmes, following good examples such the Business in the Community Ready for Work programme. Other potential areas for additional support for training and development are through the Trade unions and the Voluntary, Community, Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector that often has embedded expertise within disadvantaged communities, although it is recognised that these organisations could benefit in some instances from additional support to enable delivery (e.g. support for bid writing to generate funds).

Transport

Transport policy is a major lever for economic growth and depending upon the approach can help or hinder disadvantaged communities. The Commission is keen to encourage employers and the wider community to explore options for and support physical access to employment through sustainable transport measures.

The Commission is aware of some measures, such as the special bus services, such as those to Aztec west business park, but understand they can be variable. Some areas have very limited access to public transport and employment opportunities, especially where early shift work is required e.g. Avonmouth docks and Lawrence Weston.

The Commission learnt about some of these frustrations first hand through one of the clients at the Matthew Tree Project:

Case study: 'John' (not his real name) relayed an issue he had had recently where he had taken part in a re-training project, following a long period of unemployment, that built upon his previous skills in engineering. He was really pleased with his new skills that were designed to match employment opportunities at Avonmouth docks. However, when he was offered a new role there, he was unable to take up the opportunity as he couldn't get across the city on public transport for a shift that started before the buses were running.

There is an opportunity to improve through the forthcoming rapid bus transport system and the new travel hub linking bus and train services at Temple Meads, but the Commission understands that these will not be in place for a few years.

Therefore it is felt that interim solutions in particular need to be found and supported, such as exploring community transport support (generally older and disabled people) and offering more support for projects like Wheels to Work – helping with bus tickets, loans to buy scooters, cycle loan schemes, particularly targeted at young people and the Bristol Bike project (helping people to earn a bike).

New Enterprise areas (e.g. South Bristol) and zone offer the opportunity to link up to more sustainable travel options and put in these in place before people start employment there to enable step change (such as Freiberg in Germany).

Recommendations:

The Commission calls upon all employers in the City, including the Council and wider public sector to:

- 13.** Review current policies and actions to consider where they miss opportunities to tackle disadvantage.
 - a. For the public sector use the development of a Social Value policy to ensure that the services that are commissioned and procured can improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area as part of the Public Services Social Value Act 2012.
 - b. For all employers include as part this; a review of access to work (transport), taking into account potential season ticket loans and other options such as expanding 'Wheels to Work' schemes, community/dedicated bus services and more other options such as flexible business hubs or home working.
- 14.** Ensure that all those involved in the big city investments such as the arena, football stadium, enterprise zone and areas like South Bristol are playing a full part in addressing inequality in the City, from start (e.g. construction firms) to finish (e.g. access to employment).
 - a. In stimulating job creation, focus on getting employment for people in the poorest neighbourhoods either by bringing jobs to them, or taking them to jobs.
- 15.** Work together to develop further understanding of and subsequently agree a Bristol Charter that could deliver part and full accreditation on:
 - a. Adopting a Living wage
 - b. Family friendly policy and practice
 - c. Avoidance of zero or low hour contracts wherever possible (precarious employment)
 - d. Adoption of the Workplace Health and Wellbeing charter.
- 16.** Work together to enable the development of an improved employment service, advice and guidance for adults, offering local control to enable greater matches in sustainable skills development and opportunities.
 - a. As part of this recognise first step routes into employment and skills development particularly for parents in long term disadvantaged communities, such as light touch, creative courses.
 - b. Make efforts to restore access to ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) courses for those furthest from the labour market.
- 17.** Re-shape the draft City Employment and Enterprise Strategy – in particular, the gender, ethnic and disability implications need further acknowledgment, exploration and action planning – and drive it forward. Include work around employment discrimination – on grounds of race, gender, disability, age and sexuality. Link into the work of the Trade Unions.
 - a. Employers should through positive action, seek to increase the proportion of local people they employ from under-represented groups, such as: those from black and minority ethnic groups, women, disabled people and those from low-income parts of the city.
 - b. Ensure all premises are DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) compliant and that there are employment opportunities for disabled people.

Parental employment:

18. The Council to lead by example and work with other employers in the city to ensure that more decent part-time, jobshare and family-friendly employment is available locally, including through becoming a 'Timewise' Council and reviewing opportunities as part of procurement and commissioning.
 - a. Consider tailored support for parents, as part of recommendation 18, above.
19. Include the drive for family-friendly jobs in the same way as for Living Wage jobs (perhaps initiating a 'making Bristol work for parents' coalition/campaign).
20. Initiate research and action on the gender pay gap in Bristol linking this to the work of the trades unions and Bristol Women's Commission, as above.

Future landmark investments:

21. Enable Bristol to test and develop an enhanced employment support service for adults in Bristol, building on good local examples, such as the Ready for Work scheme provided by Business in the Community (BITC).
 - a. Continue to focus on transport access to work schemes as highlighted above and with particular acknowledgement to the difficulties faced by those in South Bristol.

Influencing national policy:

22. Argue for the devolution of funding for employment support down to local authority level.

3. Fair Wages – a living wage for all

Ambition three - The Commission supports the Council's commitment to becoming a living wage employer itself and firmly believes that it has to lead by example if it is to expect others to adopt it too. No-one in Bristol should do a hard day's work for less than they can afford to live on. Tackling income inequality is crucial to forging a fairer Bristol. Bristol should aim to become a leading living wage city.

As part of this work it reviewed the evidence already gathered by the Scrutiny Inquiry day including the general principle of a living wage, how it is established, the benefits for employees and the employer and the process for accreditation.

The living wage is currently at £7.65 an hour (outside London) and is calculated on the level of income considered by the public to be enough to have a minimum acceptable standard of living.⁸

The commission understands talks are still ongoing with the unions at the Council to agree an overall package of terms and conditions for employees that is supportive, but also sustainable, but in the interim a one off payment that equates to the living wage has been paid to staff that are on the lower incomes.

The Commission believes real step change can happen if the Council can encourage other large public sector employers in the City to also adopt the living wage or minimum income guarantees. As well as moving towards commissioned contractors, over time, being asked to do the same (at scheduled contract renewal points).

The commission recognises that there may be concern from smaller employers or those working in competitive sectors such as Social Care. However if it becomes a requirement (after a build in time), particularly across the wider economic area for example, where care homes are likely to draw in a number of residents from different authorities so that all contractors are working to the same requirements, it levels the playing field.

There is evidence that employers will benefit from:⁹ increased productivity, lower staff turnover, reduced absenteeism, increased stability of the workforce and improved staff morale, motivation and commitment. Increased investment in training and higher service quality may also be seen. For young people it can improve their life chances and help invest in their futures.

Demonstrating this evidence to employers will be helpful to alleviate concerns. In this regard, the Commission welcomes the agreement signed between Business West and the TUC in November last year to work together to advise upon and promote the living wage to its members, particularly by those that have already made the move.

The Commission was hoping to engage with Business West on this issue, but was unable to do so in the time available. Therefore it would be helpful for the Council to continue the dialogue.

The Commission is also keen for the Council to continue to review its own position on pay inequality (pay ratios) and zero or low hour contracts as well as further promoting and supporting good employment practice through active procurement policy (including the further development and adoption of a Social Value Policy in recognition of the principles of the Social Value Act (2012)).

⁸ UK living wage rate (outside London) is calculated annually by the Centre for Research in Social Policy at Loughborough University with funding from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation

⁹ GLA Economics (2009) *An independent study of the business benefits of implementing a Living Wage policy in London*, London: London Economics.

The Social Value Act requires all public bodies in England to consider how the services they commission and procure might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area.

Bristol has a Workplace Wellbeing Charter to encourage safe and healthy work places – the Commission backs the initiative recently launched by the Mayor and supported through public health. Encouraging local employers to promote the health and wellbeing of their staff is positive for staff but also benefits employers.

A third of adult life is spent at work, so good quality work is a major contributor to health and wellbeing. Conversely, insecure and poor quality work has a negative impact on both physical and mental health. Sickness absence costs the Bristol economy £240m per year (10 million working hours lost) so there are strong business incentives to do this.

Recommendations:

- 23.** Bristol City Council should aim to become a fully accredited Living Wage Employer, first with staff and then working through procurement, contracting and best value policies to raise awareness and understanding of the benefits of it with contracted services before implementing this requirement over time (at scheduled contract renewal points).
 - a. Review the use of agency staff at the Council and use any savings made, through avoiding top-up charges, to help support the costs of a Living Wage.
 - b. Work with and support Business West and the Trades Union Congress (TUC) as part of their joint declaration to promote the benefits of the Living Wage with other city employers and businesses (large and small), including the NHS, Universities, and the Voluntary and Community Sector Set up a Bristol Living Wage Joint-planning Board to deliver the above and for the City to provide an annual report on progress towards becoming a Fair Pay City.
- 24.** Request all major employers and all who tender for Council contracts publish pay differentials so they are open to scrutiny. The Council should aim for a ratio of no more than 10:1 within three years.

Social partnership:

- 25.** Prioritise sustainable economic growth that maximises opportunities and benefits all people, including the most disadvantaged and ensure better quality jobs are available to the most disadvantaged so all share in any growth, bringing increased spending into local communities.
 - a. Invite Business West and other employer umbrella bodies in the City to help businesses better understand precarious employment and its impact on household income. This should include the rise in zero hours' contracts, particularly in the care sector, and the implications for staff and clients.
 - b. Consider ways to help boost earnings in the city through employment support, skills development and employee engagement. Welcome the positive role of trade unions.
 - c. Consider, with partners, how to help employers honour and government enforce the National Minimum Wage.

Influencing national policy:

- 26.** As a first step on the issue of sustainable employment, engage with government to improve the level of the National Minimum Wage, working as part of the National Social Inclusion network.
- 27.** Argue for any benefit savings made as a consequence of paying the living wage to be used to improve the level of child and working tax credits and, in future, universal credit to low income working families.

4. Fairness for low income families

Ambition four - The poorest people have taken the biggest hit, particularly those with young children, women and disabled people. The impact is visible in Bristol with, amongst other things, the growth of food banks. Bristol needs to take action to help them.

Incomes and debt

Low-income families face £22 billion a year in cuts to benefits and tax credits. 70% of these cuts fall on families with children and 60% of the cuts at each budget and spending review have hit low-income working families. Treasury documents show, with the exception of the richest 10 per cent, 4 in 5 households in the richest half of the income distribution are now better-off since 2010, compared to 4 in 5 of the poorest half of households who are worse off.¹⁰ There is cross-party, shared UK objective to end child poverty by 2020. However, according to the Institute for Fiscal Studies, child poverty is now projected to rise by nearly one million by 2020.¹¹ Therefore, it looks like, instead eliminating it; we are facing a child poverty crisis.

Also, the poor pay more - low income families in the poorest fifth of the population have faced inflation rates 7% higher than the richest fifth.¹² There is also a 'poverty premium' on goods and services paid for by low income households, partly as a result of high VAT, but also due to the inability to benefit from shopping discounts and direct debit deals, for example, with fuel providers. The Council has a key role to play on these issues, through direct service provision and by engaging with Government on specific barriers (as part of the Social Inclusion Network), but it is also important here to get the support of the wider City.

Reducing the cost of living and creative use of policy can help to ease disadvantage. The Commission heard from the Council's own welfare, benefit and customer support services as well as local advice agencies, the local credit union and clients accessing one of Bristol's food banks run by The Matthew Tree Project. The continuing implications of welfare reform benefit delays and sanctions remain high on the agenda, particularly as we move towards the Government ending the funding for local welfare assistance schemes from 2015.

The Commission welcomed the pro-active work that the Council had undertaken with all the key agencies and within the Council to ensure people are being supported, for example, through discretionary housing payments, while they adjust to changing and uncertain benefit arrangements. This work has included pro-active notice of forthcoming changes to help people have time to prepare (particularly the 400 benefit cap cases) and working with Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) seconded officers and sharing knowledge of the changes affecting people (especially cumulative impact). There has also been work to ensure people are aware of the benefits they are entitled to and establishing take-up. The Commission particularly welcomed the decision not to pass on the 10% funding cut in the council tax reduction scheme to low income claimants - for a second year running. And it has taken the decision not to penalise people who are in rent arrears due to the under occupancy charge (bedroom tax), by not allowing them to move. These are important protective steps.

The welfare advice agencies report that they are under major pressure with high demand for their services. Clients at the Food bank expressed frustration with restrictions on working where immigration issues are being reviewed and the often inflexible and inappropriate imposition of benefit sanctions. There was also a particular concern at the practice of some doctors who are charging for medical certificates and letters in connection with benefit claims. This is something the Commission felt should be taken up with the health service.

¹⁰ HM Treasury (2014) *Chart 2.D: Cumulative impact of modelled tax, tax credit and benefit changes on households in 2014-15 as a percentage of 2014-15 net income, by income distribution*, Impact of Households: distributional analysis to accompany Budget 2014, London: HM Treasury.

¹¹ Browne J, Hood A and Joyce R (2014) *Child and working-age poverty in Northern Ireland over the next decade: an update*, London: IFS.

¹² Adams A, Hood A and Levell P (2014) *The Squeeze on incomes*, The IFS Green Budget, London: IFS.

More positive actions included work in communities to encourage use of local credit unions, rather than pay day lenders and exploration of creative use of planning to reduce betting shops and junk food shops near schools. Although the Commission did not have time to specifically explore options to reduce fuel poverty, they are aware of the Bristol City Council's Energy Service work to support actions that reduce energy bills for local people on low incomes.

Recommendations:

- 28.** Continue to support and promote local help and advice agencies, encouraging outreach and promotional activity – particularly around money advice and welfare rights advice – which could help bring money into poorer areas and encourage take-up of unclaimed benefits and tax credits, including council discretionary payments.
 - a. Maintain level of Welfare Rights and Money Advice Service (WRAMAS) free training for all support agencies, Bristol City Council (BCC) staff and partners and ensure customers get good benefits information, advice and assistance where this is part of the job role –e.g., social workers.
 - b. Approach the Health and Wellbeing Board to discuss the health impact of rising inequality and falling family incomes and the local experience of welfare reform.
 - c. Invite the local branch of NHS England in dialogue with GP Commissioners to seek to end the practice of charging for medical certificates and letters in connection with benefit claims. As a first step, seek to establish a standard agreement across Bristol as to what a supporting medical letter should cost.
- 29.** Prioritise and secure funding for a local welfare assistance scheme, even after earmarked Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) funding ends in 2015. Aim to be among the best in the country for paying cash grants and having a formal review process, as in Scotland.
- 30.** Work together across the city to recognise the value of the local credit unions and the support they can offer to disadvantaged communities:
 - a. Develop a city campaign to get more staff across a range of organisations and other residents to support local credit unions (and therefore people on lower incomes) by having accounts with them and help pump prime their work.
 - b. Explore giving young people in contact with local services a first bank account with the credit union to promote understanding of good money management.
- 31.** Continue to explore ways to discourage pay day lending and borrowing in Bristol, particularly in the most disadvantaged areas and maintain enforcement action against illegal activity by loan sharks who prey on vulnerable residents).
- 32.** Work together across the City to support the development of key facilities including pop up services within communities to encourage local employment, spend and access to services (free cashpoints, local supermarkets that meet local need and support healthy priorities, easy online access.) Equally use planning 'use' classes more creatively to discourage pay day loans and betting shops from stripping money out of deprived communities.
- 33.** End food 'deserts' - support alternative or community supermarkets using local suppliers. And work to end the poverty premium paid by low-income residents who tend to pay more for food, fuel and other items by, for example, encouraging low cost food stores.
- 34.** Support research to identify the reasons why so many of Bristol's residents are using Food Banks and establish a model of best practice for all food bank providers. Use the findings to coordinate a local response to include work with relevant local agencies.
- 35.** Work with local DWP and Jobcentre plus representatives and engage on a strategic level through the national social exclusion network to address inappropriate and inflexible benefit sanctions that can send citizens spiralling into crisis.
- 36.** Work together across the City to end the digital divide. Provide local access and training on IT in libraries, advice centres and community centres, plus continue to help to access a computer through the re-use scheme so local people are not cut off from key services – e.g., claiming benefits, accessing financial services or applying for jobs.

Future landmark investments:

37. Continue to make up the 10% shortfall in Council Tax Reduction Schemes funding for non-pensioner households.

Influencing national policy:

38. Campaign for continued funding for local welfare assistance and discretionary housing schemes.
39. Campaign to make it a recognised part of GPs role to provide evidence in relation to benefit claims and make it unlawful in the NHS to charge for sick notes, letters and reports in connection with benefit claims.

5. Fair and healthy communities – a happy, healthy city

Ambition five – Listen to and learn from Bristol's vibrant inner-city communities, so badly hit by austerity. Invest in them and their local infrastructure. Make Bristol a happy, healthy city.

The Commission heard evidence from public health and transport on measures to help disadvantaged communities. And, the Commission supports the new policies that are seeking to (re)unite communities (e.g. 20mph zones, more cycling and walking, a greater public transport focus, as well as festivals and activities such as 'Keep Sunday Special'.)

There was not time or the resources to engage on any scale with local communities on these issues, but the Commission used evidence from neighbourhood teams and public health neighbourhood data to draw together their recommendations.

The Commission didn't directly discuss affordable housing in the city as it did not want to overlap with the Homes Commission, but it is recognised that housing affordability is a major issue in the City, as is overcrowding for some households, and quality within the private rented sector all of which touch on the Fairness agenda, therefore the Commission is keen to ensure that the Council seeks every opportunity to address these issues.

From a fairness perspective, mental wellbeing is particularly important. Mental ill health is a major consequence of unemployment, sickness absence and social isolation and a risk factor for poverty. It is a cause of discrimination, particularly in the field of employment, and still carries stigma. Addressing mental ill-health and promoting positive mental wellbeing would have major benefits across the life course.

Social isolation can have physically and emotionally damaging effects resulting in depression, poor nutrition, decreased immunity, anxiety, fatigue, and social stigma. Weak social connections carry a health risk that is more harmful than not exercising, twice as harmful as obesity, and is comparable to smoking 15 cigarettes a day or being an alcoholic.

Socially isolated older adults have longer stays in hospital, a greater number of GP visits and are more dependent on homecare services. This means there is an economic as well as a health related case to be made for tackling social isolation.

Recommendations:

40. To support Bristol's Child Health in particular we need to:

- a. To protect children, continue to promote and prioritise traffic calming, 20 mile an hour limits and green zones in the most disadvantaged areas.
- b. Protect and maximise opportunities to access local green, safe and attractive spaces, including converting patches of scrubland space for community use.
- c. Support food growing initiatives for health and recreational benefits including those such as community orchards.
- d. Avoid fast food outlets near schools (by using planning laws effectively).
- e. The Commission supports the Sports Commission recommendations to seek opportunities and agreement with sports facilities owners and operators, including schools, to unlock facilities for extended use by clubs and communities.
- f. Target awareness raising of child health and social isolation issues, especially in cluster areas.
- g. Review community assets for those areas and identify opportunities for use such as community kitchens.

- h. Support pro-active health measures including delivery of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy which contains 10 priorities for action;¹³ and social prescribing activities through GPs.
- 41. Poverty and fear of crime can lead to greater levels of social isolation in neighbourhoods, therefore work with key agencies to address this including through the active citizen agenda and forthcoming Cities of Service Volunteering programme.
 - a. Invite neighbourhood police to work closely with older and disabled groups.
 - b. Encourage local good neighbour schemes to reduce social isolation and build community spirit.
 - c. Continue to act on domestic violence with agencies working together to ensure accessible services and a swift response. This should include a review of support services to Children and Young People affected by domestic violence in their homes and that these factors are considered as part of any re-commissioning process.
 - d. Research the local impact of stop and search on communities and work with them to find alternative methods of policing.
- 42. Local grassroots organisations are essential to the success of Bristol, know the communities and their needs, and are approachable/accessible to local people. Seek support from across the City to help fund, encourage and enable local VCS groups to thrive and to deliver services to Bristol communities where they align to City priorities.
 - a. Continue to engage with local communities in thinking about how to share community assets – sharing resources between the council, statutory and voluntary providers, to include: buildings, training, IT systems and support. Community assets could be made available first to local community organisations before they are considered for other uses or sold off commercially.
 - b. Explore potential quick wins through reinvesting effort from established Compact work into supporting VCSE organisations that focus on supporting people in disadvantaged communities with their fundraising and bid writing skills.
 - c. Continue to work with the VCSE sector to make commissioning processes accessible and address barriers e.g. financial thresholds that small groups cannot comply with other models such as the possibility of competitive grants as a purchasing option.
 - d. Build social value issues into the commissioning process and have early dialogue with potential providers about these types of issues and their commitment to them e.g. living wage, employing local people, recruiting local volunteers
- 43. Seek to increase the number of people seeking support for depression and anxiety, particularly in areas of high unemployment and child poverty through linking up health initiatives with advice and support services.
- 44. On transport: Community transport provision needs to include access to health appointments –Work with the Health & Wellbeing board to address this.
- 45. On housing: The Commission encourages landlords and house builders to work together on the implementation of the affordable housing strategy.

Future landmark investments:

- 46. Continue the good work in reducing bus fares and, at some point, consider introducing free bus fares for children and young people under 25.
- 47. Leverage new money for affordable, social housing developments.

Influencing national policy:

- 48. Argue for more flexibility in raising local funds for social housing and transport developments.

¹³ These are: To create a high quality green and built environment; Achieve a healthier, more sustainable and resilient food system; To reduce all forms of domestic, gender and racially based violence and abuse; Reduce smoking prevalence and illicit tobacco availability and increase smoke free areas; Reduce the harm caused by alcohol misuse; To give children the best start in life; Improve mental wellbeing and reduce social isolation; To better meet the needs of people with dementia and provide dementia friendly environments; To improve the clinical quality of and satisfaction with maternity services; and Improve services and care through better integrated care and support.

Moving forward - adopting Fairness Principles

As Fairness is a cross cutting issue, both within the Council, its partners and across the city the Commission would like to recommend:

49. The establishment, within six months of the Mayor's formal response to this report, of a Fairness Alliance to continue to work together across the City

- a. This could include one or two key meetings a year to consider issues and agree joint-working, share good practice and seek to work together to resolve issues;
- b. Promotion and encouragement of corporate social responsibility, making local citizens and organisations aware that inequality damages us all, seeking to dispel myths about the causes of poverty and inviting local action through sponsorship, corporate responsibility and active volunteering;
- c. To develop and action plan with metrics to measure progress; and
- d. Both the Council and the Fairness Alliance to report back to Cabinet after 12 months.

50. Adopting these Fairness principles for the City of Bristol:

Harness the creativity, entrepreneurialism and ingenuity of the people of Bristol to the project of greater fairness – leverage Bristol's regional strengths, cultural and business sectors.

Act on good data - measure, analyse and understand income inequality in Bristol and share the information widely so that the causes and possible solutions can be considered.

Engage in a Bristol-wide conversation about inequality, the damage it does and how to reduce it, engaging directly with disadvantaged neighbourhoods and communities and making sure that better off Bristolians are aware that inequality is bad for them too.

Engage the community at every level – do things with people and not just for them.

Make reducing income inequality a core value in decision making.

Adopt a long term view and a preventative approach that acts now to prevent bigger problems in the future.

Strive for excellence in Bristol's services and organisations and the way they work together – strive for 'one-door' to give access to all services.

Lead by example by, for example, by being the best employer in Bristol and by paying the Living Wage to Council employees and spread new approaches using the Council's supply chain.

Welcome the positive role of trade unions, corporate social responsibility and other civil society and voluntary sector groups.

Pay particular attention to families with children, their earning power, their children's development and service needs to enable them to live free from poverty and improve the life chances of their young people.

Ensure the proceeds of growth are shared fairly, prioritising investments and services to reduce inequalities and improve life chances for the most disadvantaged people and in the most disadvantaged communities.

Don't assume poor incomes and inadequately rewarded work are somehow inevitable – they are an injustice that deserves redress.

Don't let lack of city funds mean opportunities for creativity and hope are missed.

Appendices

Appendix one - Membership of the Fairness Commission



- Alison Garnham, Chief Executive, Child Poverty Action group –Commission Chair
- Claudia Wood – Chief Executive of Demos (*not pictured here*)
- Dr Michael Grady, Principal Adviser at the Institute of Health Equity, University College London
- Aliu Bello, Director, Prime Consultants UK (Bristol), former lead for projects in United Nations Children’s Fund, Unicef & Member of the African & Caribbean COC and Enterprise
- Nigel Costley, Regional Secretary, South West Trades Union Congress (TUC)
- Professor Don Webber (Applied Economics), University of the West of England. (Fairness, employment, welfare reform)
- Tracy Rees, Head of Community Impact, England West, Business-in-the-Community
- Mark Goodway, Founder and Director, The Matthew Tree Project, Bristol

The commission was supported in its work by a Council steering group, led by Deputy and Assistant Mayors Geoff Gollop and Gus Hoyt whose portfolio areas relate to this topic and a small number of Council Officers.

Appendix 2 - List of evidence received

Evidence was gathered from a range of sources; local and national statistical material, national reports and face to face evidence, including that from Commission Members themselves.

The Commission would like to thank everyone that took the time to meet with Commission members and give evidence to support its work and the invitation to join with other national work on this issue.

Expert Witnesses:

- Parents/carers and adult learners - recruited through Children's Centres onto Learning Communities Team courses
- Clients of The Matthew Tree Project, Bristol
- Professor Richard Wilkinson – co-author and founder of 'The Spirit Level – Why Equality is better for everyone' and the Equality Trust. Also Chair of York and Islington Fairness Commissions.
- Jennie Murphy - DWP Local Partnerships
- Kate Hanks – Bristol Credit union
- Paul Wheeler - Equality Bristol
- Conor Darcy - Resolution Foundation
- Mark Hubbard – Voscur, Bristol
- Andy Steward -Citizens Advice Bureau
- Helena Thompson – Bristol Debt Advice Centre
- Harry Tedstone – Advice Service Transition Fund Partnership
- Ben Sansum – Age UK Bristol
- Tove Samzelius - Single Parent Action Network, Bristol
- Council staff from Early years services, Learning Communities Team, Economy Enterprise and Inclusion, Welfare Rights and Money Advice, Benefits and Customer Services, Public Health, Transport, Neighbourhoods, Human Resources and Consultation and Research.
- George Ferguson - The Mayor of Bristol.

Attempts were made to meet with representatives from Business West, but the Commission were unable to secure these within the time available to the commission. Therefore secondary research was used in this instance with a recommendation that future dialogue is undertaken on the basis of these recommendations.

Other supporting evidence gathered including:

- Attendance at the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Poverty and the Webb Memorial Trust workshop at the Palace of Westminster
- National Social Inclusion Network arising from Birmingham Social Inclusion Symposium and Joint Declaration
- Bristol Scrutiny Enquiry day report and recommendations on the Living Wage
- Other Fairness Commission reports including York, Islington, Liverpool, Birmingham, Tower Hamlets.
- 'Fair Society, Healthy Lives' – Marmot review report
- 'Cities, Growth, Poverty' report – Joseph Rowntree Foundation
- 'Careers and Carers' report – Resolution Foundation
- 'Poverty in Perspective' report – Demos
- 'Local Authorities and Child Poverty' report – Child Poverty Action Group

- 'Personal Tax and Welfare measures' - Institute for Fiscal Studies
- The Social Value Act and Children and Families Act - LGIU briefings
- Bristol City Council information and reports including:
 - Quality of Life Survey 2013
 - Council budget consultation 2014 – 17 papers
 - Child Poverty Strategy
 - Bristol Economic Briefings, benefits newsletters, public health figures, relevant press releases

More Homes Faster Homes

The Report of the Bristol Homes Commission

June 2014

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Foreword by the Mayor of Bristol

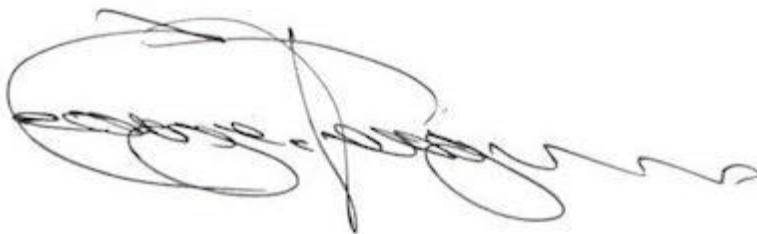


Last year I announced the establishment of a number of Mayoral Commissions in Bristol to look at key policy areas. Since this announcement we have set up a number of these Commissions, each one representing key priorities for the city, and specifically areas where we must do more to break down the barriers that risk holding us back from achieving our true potential. As I have said in my vision for the city, if we are to build successful places across Bristol, it is even more vital that we address the stark and growing challenge of housing affordability in a city with relatively high property costs.

I asked Council officers to assemble a cast-list of some of the most knowledgeable and gifted individuals who could help advise us on each of these areas, and was delighted to see the calibre of the people who were willing to give up their time and contribute so freely to the debate. Bristol owes them a huge debt of gratitude.

I will now review the findings of the Commissions and consider them as part of the Council's policy making process. I have asked officers in the Council to review the recommendations and advise on how we might implement them, giving due regard to financial, legal and other considerations. I will also ask the Council's Overview & Scrutiny function to advise my Cabinet and me on the recommendations. This draws in the perspectives of a wider cohort of Councillors representing all parts of the city – which is an opportunity to add further richness to the proposals coming forward.

Finally I would like to use this opportunity to thank each member of the Homes Commission for their substantial contribution. I am confident this work leaves the city better prepared for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'George Ferguson'. The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial 'G' and a long, horizontal flourish extending to the right.

George Ferguson

Mayor of Bristol

More Homes Faster Homes – Ten Big Ideas

These ten recommendations (which are not in priority order) will, when implemented, make the biggest difference to delivering More Homes Faster Homes

- Measures to increase the supply of developable land for new homes including in particular bringing forward sites in Council ownership following a Council wide review of land and property assets
- An enhanced and proactive role for the Bristol Property Board in bringing forward sites for the development of new homes
- A Revolving Investment Fund set up by the Council to promote and support the development of sites for new homes where short-term finance represents an obstacle to development
- More active use of Compulsory Purchase Order powers by the Council to encourage and release stalled sites and sites with complex ownership problems
- A dedicated 'stalled sites' team set up by the Council to address problems of bringing forwards specific sites and to focus on securing positive and timely outcomes
- Alternative models of new homes provision including custom build, self-build and market-rent provision to be actively supported by the Council and the Homes & Communities Agency
- The West of England Strategic Housing Market Assessment to explicitly model the need for, and likely supply of, affordable homes and the implications of the future balance of housing supply and demand for house-prices, rents and housing affordability
- Once the Strategic Housing Market Assessment is complete the Council brings forward and carries out a review of its Core Strategy and all four West of England authorities collaborate to review all Core Strategies working to a common set of policy goals to address the sub regional challenges of housing and infrastructure provision
- Council leadership to foster a clear, consistent and entrepreneurial culture that is results not process driven, that focuses on achieving measurable new homes supply outcomes and is supported by smarter, more effective systems and processes including end to end programme management for housing delivery
- Best use to be made of the Council's retained housing and owned land to support the development of new homes through measures including proactive asset management of existing council housing and identifying whether there is a portfolio of council housing that, through the mechanism of a stock transfer, has the potential to unlock access to additional private finance borrowing capacity

SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

Facing up to an uncomfortable truth

- 1.1 We are very pleased to deliver the report of the Bristol Homes Commission to the Mayor.
- 1.2 This report is one response to the serious housing crisis in Bristol a situation which, in the words of the Mayor, is one of the '*uncomfortable truths...we do need to face up to*'.

'It is a fact that the difference between average earnings and average house prices is bigger here than nearly anywhere outside the South East of England, pushing the cost of living up to impossible heights for people in the city just starting out in life' (A Vision for Bristol)

- 1.3 Setting up the Commission is a welcome and very positive signal that increasing the supply of homes, especially affordable homes, is recognised as a critical issue at the highest level within Bristol City Council and is also an issue resulting in action from the Mayor to address the problem.

Undersupply of housing is the root cause

- 1.4 The root cause of the housing crisis is years of undersupply of new homes. The rate of building of new homes has not kept pace with the demand for new homes of all types, but especially for affordable homes.
- 1.5 The housing crisis in Bristol is also, ironically, a reflection of a good news story. Bristol is a great place in which to live, work, invest and do business. Its growth and success as one of the UK's most attractive cities in which to live is reflected in the demand for homes that far outstrips supply.
- 1.6 Supply side measures to meet the demand for new homes and keep pace with Bristol's growth and success have however been insufficient. This is a key part of the 'uncomfortable truth' and so the time has come for every effort to be made and no stone to be left unturned in the delivery of more homes, faster homes. Homes that contribute to Bristol's unique quality of place, and in so doing help to continue to drive the city's popularity and prosperity.

Housing is a national and wider city region issue

- 1.7 We must also be clear that the housing crisis is not unique to Bristol – it is a national issue that ultimately demands national solutions led by government.
- 1.8 Whilst making recommendations on the national position is outside the terms of reference of the Commission, our view is that delivering national solutions must start with development of a joined up and coherent housing strategy - a National Homes Plan.

- 1.9 This must be backed by government support for deliverable solutions that properly reflect the diversity of regional housing markets.
- 1.10 Improving housing supply in Bristol must be seen in the context of Bristol's place at the centre of the wider sub region - the West of England. During the course of our inquiries a consistent request from expert witness and other informed business and community stakeholders is for the development of integrated West of England strategies and plans to address the sub regional challenges of housing and infrastructure provision.
- 1.11 What this means is that action by Bristol City Council and its partners for the benefit of people living, working and investing in Bristol is one part of the solution. But – and we must be clear on this - it is never going to be the whole solution.
- 1.12 This is one reason why the Commission recognises that the contribution of this report and its recommendations to increasing the supply of new homes in Bristol is one part of a range of interventions and possible solutions.

The bigger picture in an ideal world

- 1.13 Another important reason for the housing crisis is that current systems for delivering new homes are very complex and they have developed piecemeal over time and not in response to any coherent national or regional strategy.
- 1.14 In an ideal world we would want to replace the dysfunctions of the current home supply model with a viable and sustainable long term model. In this model, new home supply would, at a minimum, keep pace with demand, it would better meet the need for new affordable homes and it would create attractive new places that are well connected to the wider Bristol region and have good access to local services.
- 1.15 Developing a template for this new home supply model is not something the Commission has sought to do. In the time available we have focussed on framing recommendations that will contribute to a step change in the supply of homes in Bristol.
- 1.16 This ambition is reflected in the title of this report: More Homes Faster Homes and action is needed to achieve both an increase the numbers of new homes and an increase the speed at which new homes are delivered.

From vision to action and impact

- 1.17 In 'A Vision for Bristol', the Mayor reminds us that '*Whether it's 1373 or 2013 – the citizens of Bristol are not afraid to say "we can do better", "let's try something else" or "let's be different"*'.
- 1.18 The hope of the Commission is that this report and its recommendations will be seen as an opportunity to do better and that the report will lead to positive

change and action from a range of stakeholders that will contribute to the significant step change needed in the supply of new homes and faster homes.

- 1.19 The benefits of achieving this step change are hugely significant. More new homes will improve the quality of life choices for people in Bristol as well as supporting economic growth, job creation and regional competitiveness. More new affordable homes will also help reduce homelessness, improve social mobility and help control an ever rising welfare benefits bill.
- 1.20 Achieving these outcomes are important for everyone who lives in Bristol, for employers whose businesses are in Bristol and for people and employers who want to move to Bristol and invest in Bristol.

A collective responsibility

- 1.21 Enabling the delivery of More Homes Faster Homes and finding the resources to give effect to the recommendations in this report will be challenging for the Council and this is recognised by the Commission.
- 1.22 This is why, whilst in the first instance our recommendations are made to the Mayor, the Commission's view is that ultimately responsibility for achieving the required step change in the supply of new homes is a collective one.
- 1.23 It is a responsibility that lies with all those people, groups and organisations who govern, lead, shape and deliver Bristol's future housing, regeneration and development plans. If a step change in progress is to be achieved then all of us must step up to the mark and in our different, but collectively powerful, ways do our bit to support the Council and its partners in delivering More Homes Faster Homes
- 1.24 This report reflects a distillation of views, comments and evidence from a great many people. These include the Independent Members of the Homes Commission, members of the Bristol City Council Steering Group, Expert Witnesses, the Bristol Citizens Panel and a wide range of other stakeholders.
- 1.25 I am grateful to everyone for their generous donation of time, experience, knowledge and patience without which this report would not have been possible.

Nick Horne
Chair, Bristol Homes Commission
27 June 2014

SECTION 2 – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background to the housing crisis

- 2.1 The population of Bristol is 432,500 and the city has grown by 42,400 (10.9%) since 2001. As we note in section 1, Bristol's success as an attractive, vibrant and growing city – itself a good news story - has combined with a chronic under supply of new homes of all tenures.
- 2.2 It is this under supply of homes that in the opinion of the Commission is the major contributor to the current housing crisis in Bristol.
- 2.3 The crisis means that for people looking to move to Bristol for the first time or for people moving home within the city, finding a house to buy or rent that is affordable to them is a major challenge.
- 2.4 In recent years the supply of completed homes has fallen to a five year low from 2,578 in 2008/09 to 878 in 2012/13. Average Bristol house prices are now around 10 times the average income making it very difficult for anyone to buy a home of their own who doesn't have access to a very substantial deposit or an income significantly above the average.
- 2.5 The crisis in the affordable rented sector is equally acute with the demand for affordable rented homes far outstripping supply. There are over 14,000 people on the housing waiting list and there has been a decline in the number of new affordable homes built from a peak of 561 in 2008/09 to 103 in 2013/14.
- 2.6 More than 1,500 new affordable homes would be required each year to house existing and newly forming households who cannot afford to buy or rent in the Bristol housing market. The need is predominantly for rented homes, with a shortage of smaller homes and larger houses for families.
- 2.7 Further evidence about the scale of this crisis that evidences the need to increase the supply of new homes, especially of affordable homes, is documented in A Vision for Bristol (Bristol City Council), the Affordable Housing Delivery Framework (Bristol City Council) and South West Home Truths 2013/14 (National Housing Federation). However it should be noted, that with regard to affordability both to buy and to rent, there is a similar story across most of the south of the country. Because of Bristol's size the absolute problem - the total number of households unable to afford a home at a price that is reasonable relative to their income - is very significant.

The work of the Homes Commission

- 2.8 The Homes Commission was set up by the Mayor in October 2013 and is one of several initiatives designed to tackle Bristol's housing crisis and achieve the Mayor's ambition of delivering 750 new affordable homes p.a. by 2017 and 900 p.a. by 2018.

- 2.9 The title of this report - More Homes Faster Homes – reflects both the core purpose of the Commission and the priority response needed to the housing crisis. Guided by the terms of reference, the views of the Commissioners and the short (eight month) life of the Commission, our inquiries have focussed on examining housing supply issues – possible actions that should lead to ‘More Homes Faster Homes’.
- 2.10 In the time available the Commission has not considered in depth the much wider issue of how to make housing in Bristol more affordable.
- 2.11 The report’s recommendations supplements the Affordable Housing Delivery Framework which was issued early in 2014 and which sets out a range of ways affordable housing supply is planned to be increased.
- 2.12 The terms of reference of the Commission, which includes the Membership of the Commission and Steering Group are given at Appendix 3. Appendix 4 provides a list of the expert witnesses who gave evidence to the Commission and Appendix 5 outlines the supporting documents considered.
- 2.13 The Commission met eight times between November 2013 and June 2014 and took evidence from 21 expert witnesses (17 of which were external to the Commission’s own membership). All of the witnesses have significant expertise in, and insight into, different parts of the housing delivery system. They included housebuilders, developers, investors, Housing Association and Council landlords, funders, development, housing, property and planning experts, national housing bodies and government agencies.
- 2.14 The Commission provided two verbal progress reports to the Mayor during the course of its work by way of a meeting between the Chair and the Mayor in February 2014 and the Mayor attending part of the Commission’s March 2014 Meeting.
- 2.15 The Commission also sought the views of other stakeholders. Feedback from the Bristol Citizens Panel was received on some key housing questions and their report was received in May 2014. The views of a wider group of stakeholders was sought on the Commission’s emerging recommendations at a workshop in May 2014. A summary of that feedback is provided in Appendix 1. Appendix 2 outlines the process and methodology adopted by the Homes Commission to guide its work.

Recommendations and recommended areas for reform

- 2.16 The Commission’s final report and recommendations reflects the balance of opinion of the members of the Homes Commission informed by the advice of the Steering Group, by the views of Expert Witnesses, the Citizens Panel and many other stakeholders.
- 2.17 Many of the recommendations are directed to the City Council for consideration and we eagerly anticipate hearing the response to our proposals and the action that will follow. This should not however be taken to

imply that the Commission considers they are the only stakeholder who should or could make changes to improve housing supply. As has already been said, ultimately there is an important issue of collective responsibility for delivering solutions.

- 2.18 This focus is however a pragmatic reflection of the critical role that the City Council plays in controlling or influencing many parts of the housing delivery process. It also reflects the responsibility on them - through positive action in response to our recommendations - to act as a catalyst for enabling a step change in the supply of new homes at a time of housing crisis. In the section on leadership and systems we have more to say about these issues.
- 2.19 Other organisations including Registered Providers, housebuilders and developers will, we hope, also actively contribute to increasing the supply of new homes. But the reality is that the ability of the Commission to influence their actions is much reduced.
- 2.20 The Commission's priority is to encourage action to achieve an increase in the supply of new homes and especially affordable homes, as quickly as possible and in our view the organisation with greatest ability to deliver this outcome is the City Council.
- 2.21 Five key areas for reform have emerged in the course of the Commission's work:
- Making better use of existing land & site supply
 - Improving the planning system to enable improved housing delivery
 - Effective leadership, housing delivery systems & processes
 - Making best use of strategic assets including council housing and financial capacity planning
 - Funding the delivery of new homes, subsidy and affordability
- 2.22 The key recommendations from these areas for reform are summarised on the first page of this report – More Homes Faster Homes: Ten Big Ideas
- 2.23 Recommendations are given in in section 4 and our commentary for each area for reform is given in section 3 below.

Section 3 – Background and recommended areas for reform

3.1 Background and Context

Bristol is a successful, attractive and growing city

- 3.1.1 Bristol has a particularly strong set of geographical and economic assets and advantages. It has a well balanced economic base, with no one sector dominating (Oxford Economics); it benefits from its proximity and access to the south-east of England and to European markets and it has an attractive natural and built environment.
- 3.1.2 It differs in other respects – it was never part of a wider metropolitan county area with a tradition of sub-regional governance and sits as the gateway to a largely rural hinterland. It was voted best place to live in Britain by the Sunday Times in March 2014, due to “*one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country, varied and beautiful housing stock, decent schools, buzzy culture and night life and access to some fantastic countryside.*” The Cities Outlook 2014 indicated that Bristol is one of the strongest performing major English cities outside London and the report Cities in Recovery, published in April 2014 by property firm CBRE, identified Bristol as one of the best placed cities in the country to take full advantage of the economy's return to growth.
- 3.1.3 The population of the sub-region is growing significantly – at 1.1 million, 20% of the south west's population lives in the West of England. Bristol itself has an estimated population of 432,500. Since 2001 the population of the city of Bristol is estimated to have increased by 42,400 people (10.9%), this compares to an England and Wales increase of 8.0% over the same period. If recent trends continue, Bristol's population is projected to increase by an additional 44,800 people (10.5%) in the 10 years between 2011 and 2021.
- 3.1.4 The growth in Bristol is particularly notable in the primary school age population, and overall Bristol has a young population, significantly enhanced by is two universities and high graduate retention rate. Population change will be largely driven by internal population dynamics, rather than migration, thus the city is likely to grow still further.

Bristol is successful but the supply and affordability of homes are huge issues

- 3.1.5 The number of homes planned to be built in Bristol between 2006 and 2026 is set out in the adopted Local Plan Core Strategy (June 2011). The strategy aims to deliver a minimum of 26,400 homes over this period, but envisages that 30,600 will be provided. There have been 13,606 homes completed between 2006 and 2013, an annual average of 1,944 homes. Since 2006 82% of new dwellings built have been flats and 18% houses. Between 2006 and 2013 there has been a significant increase in homes in Lawrence Hill and Cabot wards, with a net increase of 4,070 homes in these two wards, this is 30% of the total increase in homes across the city.

- 3.1.6 The number of annual completions fell to 878 in 2013/14, however the number is expected to increase in 2013/14. To meet the Local Plan minimum target 12,794 (984 per year) dwellings will need to be completed between 2014 and 2026. A five-year deliverable housing supply of 6,327 homes has been identified for the period 2013 to 2018.
- 3.1.7 Affordable housing completions however, have fallen from a peak of 561 in 2008/09 to 103 in 2013/14. But the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), last updated in 2009, estimates that there needed to be 1,530 new social rented, intermediate and shared ownership homes built per annum to meet the needs of households unable to afford to purchase or rent privately. So clearly there is a disconnect between what we 'plan' to build and 'need to build' which would not cover affordable homes, let alone market homes.
- 3.1.8 Most homes in Bristol are built on small/medium sites, 93% of those built since 2003 have been on brownfield sites or conversions of existing buildings. Bristol does not have many large strategic housing sites, unlike some of its local authority neighbours and this means that availability of land that is easily developed is a particularly critical issue.
- 3.1.9 A practical implication of this is that if the wider city region is to grow and prosper then many of the new homes needed by people who want to live and work in the city region will need to be built on land within the neighbouring local authority areas of, in particular, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire as well as Bath & North East Somerset.
- 3.1.10 Because so much of the housing supply in Bristol is on smaller sites it is more difficult to achieve economies of scale and this can mean unit costs are relatively expensive compared to unit costs on schemes of 50+ homes. This is a particularly significant issue when trying to develop affordable housing.
- 3.1.11 House prices in the city fell in the recession period but by 2012 had risen to 2006 levels (£140,000 average for a lower quartile priced home). However average incomes have not kept pace with these changes and lower quartile homes still cost some seven times lower earnings levels. The problems of affordability – both to rent and to purchase – are worse in the most economically successful cities and Bristol is, as already noted, very successful.
- 3.1.1 Bristol is the 8th least affordable city on both measures in England – all of the others, London apart, are in fact satellite towns in the outer south-east (Centre for Cities, Cities Outlook 2013). The reduction in new housing supply and rising population accompanied by significant restrictions on mortgage lending has acted as a major stimulus to the growth of private renting. It has also led to an increase in Buy To Let (BTL) landlords in many cases using funds from BTL mortgages with investors seeking long term returns from what they believe will be an appreciating asset providing a rising inflation proof income.
- 3.1.2 Of the 190,000 homes in the city 24% are now privately rented, which exceeds the total council and housing association stock combined at 21%.

The growth in private renting has been at the expense of owner-occupation, rather than as a result of new build market rent which as yet appears to be largely unviable as an investment product.

Developers will always want to develop new homes – just so long as the margins are right for their business model

3.1.3 As at May 2013 there were just over 5000 consented homes (plots with planning permissions) in Bristol where construction had not commenced. We make recommendations on this issue later as it represents both a significant challenge and an opportunity.

3.1.4 Understanding the business model of developers and housebuilders is central to understanding the reason for this number of ‘stalled sites’. In the words of one expert witness:-

“Most developers if they have planning on a site want to do something with it...the reality is developers can only finance and process so many sites at any one time so they have a land bank and pipeline” (large national developer)

3.1.5 However it would not be true to say that all developers operate to the same business model. It is likely, though we have not gathered evidence to prove this, that for many of the smaller and medium sites in Bristol that are stalled are not held by volume developers, it is cash flow and viability that are the main reasons why sites have not been built out. Many of the stalled sites were acquired at the height of the pre-recession housing boom. Post 2008 as the housing market went into recession many schemes became unviable, that is, unable to deliver the margins required by the developer’s business model.

‘Housebuilders will generally look for returns that satisfy their investment criteria, normally scheme margins in excess of 20%’ (large housebuilder)

3.1.6 The good news for new homes supply is that in recent months a rising housing market has improved the viability prospects for many of the stalled sites in the city.

3.1.7 Delivering developer target margins is easier on larger sites, especially when the scheme can be phased over a longer period and the developer can better control their costs and work in progress. The lower numbers of larger sites that provide this scope to developers in Bristol is therefore a challenge.

3.1.8 On smaller sites development of higher rise flatted schemes is often the only viable alternative to generate sufficient numbers of new homes and the requisite developer margin.

3.1.9 But in a weak and hesitant housing market – such as seen in Bristol over much of the last few years – this presents the developer with significantly more risk as flatted schemes require a high higher up front developer investment than developing houses on phased sites.

- 3.1.10 And of course, in a weaker housing market, this increased risk cannot command a higher return as the market is not robust enough.

*'We are nervous about major developments with lots of infrastructure up front'
(large national developer)*

- 3.1.11 It is implicit in the business model used by most developers that minimising affordable housing can maximise returns. Providing affordable housing lowers the profitability of a site and developers therefore prefer sites which provide 100% of homes for sale. Although some developers see the early benefits of affordable housing as assisting with cashflow and providing early presales, affordable housing remains a net cost to a development and this is an issue when schemes are marginally viable.

A Homes Commission focus on supply - More Homes Faster Homes – not on affordability

- 3.1.12 The summary above paints a picture of housing issues in the broader economic, demographic and development context.

- 3.1.13 A key issue is that the provision of affordable housing (sub-market rent and low cost home ownership) is not the same as making homes more affordable.

- 3.1.14 The Barker Review of Housing supply in 2004 clearly articulated that the only way of improving affordability overall is to bring demand and supply into balance, whilst at the same time recognising the difficulties of doing so within a market heavily influenced by land use planning.

- 3.1.15 It is evident that this is not currently the case in Bristol and this report does not make recommendations about doing so, nor about other possible ways to makes homes more affordable such as rent control. What it does do is explore the options available for improving the supply of new homes and for accelerating the rate of new home delivery - More Homes Faster Homes.

3.2 Land and sites supply

- 3.2.1 From all of the evidence considered by the Commission, the supply of land and sites is the issue with the greatest potential to enable the delivery of more homes, faster homes. In the words of one witness:

'In order to increase housing supply we need to look at land supply' (large Registered Provider developer)

- 3.2.2 This section explores and makes recommendations on some key land and site supply issues for land controlled by the public sector and by the private sector.

Creatively using land controlled by Bristol City Council

- 3.2.3 The public estate within Bristol City boundary includes extensive land and property assets held by the City Council, with an estimated value of £1bn.
- 3.2.4 In addition it includes estates held by central government departments such as the Department of Health, the Homes & Communities Agency and the Department for Transport and land and property owned by local health trusts and the emergency services. Most, but not all, of this land is in active use and this creates opportunities.
- 3.1.1 Bristol City Council has recently audited its portfolio and has identified a first phase of its land amounting to 24 hectares which are programmed for disposal. This will provide 300 plus affordable homes brought forward on City Council land alone during 2015/16 and 2016/17.
- 3.2.5 The Council has already started to release this land to deliver new homes, including affordable homes and this process is strongly supported by the Commission.
- 3.2.6 The Commission would also support the Council adopting a pro-active approach to identifying further phases of surplus estate within its portfolio, including for example, surplus estate resulting from the additional sharing of services and opportunities for co-location.
- 3.2.7 In addition to the rapid identification of further land held by the Council which is surplus to requirements and is available immediately and an asset review focussing on service provision review/co-location to release land; further consideration is needed as to where there are high value Council owned-land with development potential for new homes, where services could be relocated without adversely affecting service provision.
- 3.2.8 This would signal a different approach to the Council's management of its estate and land assets. The objective is to drive out value through the release of land for the provision of new homes; and potentially includes acquisition (for relocated uses) in addition to disposals.

- 3.2.9 Our proposition is that there should be a formal review of whether uses/services are in the most appropriate location, or whether they should be relocated to free up a particular site for re-development and whether that location is capable of supporting homes or other uses instead.
- 3.2.10 The shift we are looking for is not the maintenance of the exiting estate in the existing location, but a more flexible and responsive approach to the changing needs of the Council's service provision and the value release and redevelopment for new homes – creating new opportunities presented by existing assets.

Recommendation 1 – Proactively looking for opportunities to create additional housing land and site assembly options

The Commission recommends that the City Council carries out a review of all of the land and estate within its control so as to identify additional housing land and site supply options over the short, medium and longer term.

This process should give active consideration to creative ways in which services and use of existing sites can be reconfigured to release additional housing land. Expertise located in the Bristol Property Board should be called on as required to support this review process.

Possible initiatives would include for example; -

- i) Combining council land with that of other public bodies to create more attractive portfolios*
- ii) Considering co-location with other public agencies and subsequent site disposal where the location of the provision of services is flexible*
- iii) Considering the complete relocation of services from high value sites which may have significant re-development potential for new homes and jobs services, to other locations*

Commitment to a cyclical review of estate assets (e.g. every three years) in the light of changing service delivery priorities

- 3.2.11 The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) is the Government's delivery agency for land-based housing and economic growth. The HCA holds 28 hectares of land across various sites in Bristol which have the potential to deliver up to 1,300 new homes. This portfolio is currently being de-risked, serviced as necessary and will be brought to market within the next twelve months for disposal and re-development.
- 3.2.12 As part of a Government-wide initiative, other government departments are currently identifying land in Bristol which is surplus to their requirements and so available for release in the short to medium term. It is likely that some of this will be transferred to the Homes & Communities Agency for similar de-risking and rapid disposal to provide new homes and jobs.

Enhancing the role of the Bristol Property Board to deliver a co-ordinated approach to creating public sector land disposal opportunities

- 3.2.13 Working together, the City Council and the Homes & Communities Agency have recently released a list containing 14 sites in their ownership, totalling 36 hectares and capable of delivering up to 1,700 new homes.
- 3.2.14 Releasing portfolios of public land in this co-ordinated way can help to bring a more significant and attractive land portfolio opportunity to market, so increasing market interest and helping to expedite disposal and subsequent development.
- 3.2.15 Such portfolios could comprise land owned by one or more public bodies and spread throughout the City, as in the example above. Alternatively it could involve the release of land owned by multiple public bodies within a *specific neighbourhood or locality*, including where a cross-agency approach such as this could be linked to wider regeneration or growth objectives identified by the City Council.
- 3.2.16 In recognition of the benefits of working in a co-ordinated way across the public estate, Bristol City Council has established the Bristol Property Board (BPB). The BPB is a partnership of the City Council and other major public landowners within Bristol, with private sector expertise and challenge provided via the Local Enterprise Partnership's representatives on the Board.
- 3.2.17 The Bristol Property Board has an important local role in helping all public bodies who own land within Bristol to identify where and how they can collaborate to create added value from planning development opportunities as well as a swift disposal of surplus assets to drive up the delivery of new homes and jobs.

Case Study – City Gateway, Festival Way Bristol

An example of this approach in action is the City Gateway, Festival Way, Bristol. The British Rail Residuary Body (BRRB) owned former sidings at Ashton which had lain inaccessible and derelict for a number of years. The HCA acquired the 3.4 hectare site from BRRB in September 2013 in order to accelerate its release for residential-led development.

By the HCA and Bristol City Council working together, a solution has been found to access this previously land-locked site; part of this involving adjoining City Council owned land. HCA has further de-risked the site by preparing a Planning Concept Statement for adoption by the City Council.

The site was released to the market in March 2014 and once developed will deliver approximately 150 new homes, together with a small component of commercial and retail space centred on the new Metro-Bus Station being provided as part of this scheme. The turnaround time from acquisition of this surplus public land from BRRB to bringing it to market following de-risking was six months.

3.2.18 The Bristol Property Board's terms of reference also provide for it to support public sector partners in their consideration of opportunities arising from the rationalisation of their estate.

3.2.19 A recent example in Bristol is the relocation of the Council's Pest Control Depot from the City Centre Temple Quarter Enterprise Zone to an edge of city location, therefore releasing this City Centre site for enabling development to unlock a major housing and mixed-use scheme.

3.2.20 The Commission considers that the approach being taken by the BPB has a major part to play in enhancing the development of housing land and site supply options. Evidence to the Commission suggests that with a greater resource and support the BPB would be better able to deliver its full potential.

3.2.21 Our recommendation is that the role of the BPB is strengthened as follows;

Recommendation 2 - Enhancing the role of the Bristol Property Board

The Commission strongly supports the Bristol Property Board (BPB) having a more direct role with the authority to broker deals across all public bodies that release land for affordable housing use, in partnership with other agencies, especially the Homes & Communities Agency.

Specifically;

i) The Commission recommends that the BPB is given, or more robustly adopts, this land deal brokering role. The BPB should then be able to make recommendations on options to enable an increase in the supply of housing land and sites

ii) The Commission recommends that consideration is given by the BPB to having a dedicated senior resource who can support the identification of opportunities and can 'make things happen'.

Creating a balanced housing market

3.2.22 In return for support from the City Council and Bristol Property Board in assisting to expediting land disposals, and in lieu of making a direct financial contribution for this service, public sector land owners could agree to allow some of the 'added value' created by this process to be directed towards achieving an enhanced residential tenure mix on the respective site.

3.2.23 So, for example, it would be entirely appropriate to require that the public sector owner of a challenging site which is unlocked by intensive support from the Council and the Bristol Property Board, includes a requirement for additional affordable and/or private rented homes in the disposal brief for the site.

3.2.24 This is something being piloted by the Homes and Communities Agency at its City Gateway site, where the added value created by Bristol City Council and

Property Board working with the Agency to de-risk the site and drive delivery has been recognised by the HCA in its disposal brief which requires developers to provide around 30% private rented homes as part of the wider tenure mix.

Rescuing stranded assets: Investing to divest and investing to deliver

- 3.2.25 A proportion of the public estate, particularly that of Bristol City Council, is difficult to develop swiftly as sites are technically challenging and require investment in advanced infrastructure or other work before the market will take the risk in its development.
- 3.2.26 Moreover, sites in secondary locations within the city often need de-risking by way of planning certainty and /or infrastructure before such sites become attractive to developers.
- 3.2.27 In order to unlock these 'stranded assets' within its portfolio for the development of new homes the Council should consider establishing a Revolving Investment Fund to invest in de-risking its sites to bring to market.
- 3.2.28 The Council investment could be recouped upon a subsequent disposal so creating an 'invest to divest to deliver' model, with funds managed on a recoverable and recyclable basis to support the continued release of the public estate.
- 3.2.29 This is likely to provide a particularly useful tool in driving up value in secondary locations by advanced infrastructure de-risking planning to bring market certainty. This type of 'invest to divest to deliver' fund would leverage value in locations such as Hengrove Park in south Bristol; indeed the HCA is already using its national investment funds in exactly this way at Filwood Park in South Bristol.
- 3.2.30 If successful, the Council could offer this local 'invest to divest' fund, together with tailored support, to those public bodies and possibly other organisations in Bristol who agree to dispose of land in accordance with a programme of disposals managed by the Bristol Property Board.
- 3.2.31 Given the above, the Commission recommendation is as follows:

Recommendation 3 – Creating a Revolving Investment Fund to support Stranded Assets

To unlock the housing development potential of sites that are 'stranded' for example because they are technically challenging and / or require connecting infrastructure works before they will be viable housing development sites, the Commission recommends that the Council consider setting up a Revolving Investment Fund.

This would be used to fund site investment works that would unlock its development value. The council's investment and an appropriate risk based

return would be recouped on subsequent sale of the site. This would create a 'win win' situation for both the Council and for the public (or other) body who currently own the stranded site.

Sites funded in this way and released to the market for the development of new homes would form part of an Annual Disposals Plan (see Recommendation 5) overseen by the Bristol Property Board so as to provide maximum clarity and transparency to the market.

Creating value from the review and regeneration of 'greyfield sites'

3.2.32 The scale of the housing crisis in Bristol means that no stone should be left unturned in the quest to unlock land and sites that could deliver more homes. Whilst Bristol does not enjoy the benefits of having a large number of large 'strategic' sites, there are a substantial number of 'greyfield sites' in the city.

3.2.33 By 'greyfield' we mean the low density parts of Bristol some characterised by (potentially) under-utilised public amenity land and disconnected communities. Many of these communities suffer from various measure of deprivation over a prolonged period.

3.2.34 The challenge and opportunity is to consider how programmes of regeneration can be used to realise the potential in these areas to create land opportunities from underused public amenity land and so provide significant numbers of new homes and possibly too also local jobs. One example for example would be to continue with work on the Knowle West Regeneration Framework and link to Hengrove Park.

3.2.35 The Commission understands that unlocking land assets and creating social and economic value through regeneration in greyfield areas is difficult and requires sensitive management. But given the scale of the current homes crisis the Commission recommends that this is an area that should at least be considered.

Recommendation 4 – Creating value from regenerating brownfield/greyfield areas of land and sites

The Commission recommends that the Council considers the potential benefits to new homes supply that would flow from carrying out carefully targeted regeneration activity in areas where there is underutilised public amenity land.

Driving the release of land through an Annual Disposal Plan: A Prospectus for Housing

3.2.36 National Government has re-stated its commitment to simplifying and streamlining the disposal of surplus Central Government land to provide new homes and jobs. It has tasked the Homes and Communities Agency with expediting this process on behalf of the various Government Departments and their respective agencies and trusts.

- 3.2.37 In support of this, Government has required each Central Government Department to publish, on an annual basis, its national Asset Disposal Plan, indicating which assets are to be released to the market annually, and the intended method of disposal.
- 3.2.38 The impact of this could be enhanced if the Homes and Communities Agency, with the Bristol Property Board, were to work with the Central Government Departments, and other public sector landowners, on a pilot scheme in Bristol to assemble and publish a cross-public estate Disposals Plan specifically for the City – an Annual Disposals Plan for Public Land in Bristol. This would give forward visibility to developers of the opportunities in the City.
- 3.2.39 At the moment there is no single document which brings together the annual disposal intentions of the entirety of the Government estate in Bristol. Nor does the City Council itself publish a disposal plan which identifies sites for release and subsequent redevelopment for housing and other uses within any year.
- 3.2.40 An effective Annual Disposals Plan: A Prospectus for Housing will involve detailed consideration of each site in advance against a site marketing and disposals protocol to be developed by the City Council, and a differentiated approach - OJEU; Competitive Tender; Panel Tender; Negotiated Disposal etc – depending on the risk profile and other factors for each site.
- 3.2.41 Our view is that this should expedite the take up of public land for redevelopment by providing forward visibility of land opportunities to developers, housing associations and others.

Recommendation 5 – Preparing an Annual Prospectus for Housing

The Commission recommends that the Council and/or Bristol Property Board should prepare an annual disposals plan (a Prospectus for Housing) that brings together all the site disposal plans of public landowners in Bristol. This should ideally be for at least 3 years ahead and then be rolled forward.

Stalled sites

- 3.2.42 Within Bristol there are, as of May 2013, sites with planning permissions capable of delivering 5,000 homes which are not progressing so called ‘stalled sites’.
- 3.2.43 The West of England Local Enterprise Partnership has commissioned work to ascertain the reasons for why stalled sites have not progressed and these reasons include:
- Sites where a landowner is speculating by holding back land (waiting for the market to rise to produce a higher return)

- Sites which cannot progress owing to the lack of finance available for major upfront infrastructure
- Sites where the developer is unable to access development finance generally; or is unable to access this on reasonable terms;
- Sites which are not viable owing to historic expectations relating to land value/recovery of previous investment; high S106 contributions, or where costs exceed value owing to adverse ground contribution or other technical reasons; or general market failure in a particular location.

3.2.44 These factors are not mutually exclusive, and in combination can produce 'hardcore' stalled sites which have failed to progress for a number of years and with successive planning consents.

3.2.45 Such sites can often be out of sequence with the rise and fall of the market in that they are planned or promoted in time of market buoyancy, only to stall as they break ground at that point of the economic cycle where a market downturn begins to bite and the site becomes no longer viable.

3.2.46 There are a number of interventions which can help to unlock such sites;

- Bristol City Council has Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers to use in extremis;
- Central Government through the HCA can invest in the provision of advanced infrastructure, with such investment repayable as the scheme progresses;
- Private landowners and / or developers can re-base their financial return expectations by taking a reduced land value or profit margins – with a view to unlocking some value, rather than continuing to encounter increasing holding and sunk costs making a start ever less likely
- The Local Planning Authority can take a view on S106 payment; and/or the phasing of a scheme; including time-related incentives to bring forward development.

Case Study – Unlocking Wapping Wharf

An example of a successful intervention that resulted in the unlocking of a stalled site is Wapping Wharf. In this case the successful unlocking elements included renegotiation of the planning conditions with the Council, a change to the scheme tenure mix to introduce private sector rent and improve scheme viability and additional infrastructure investment from the HCA.

- 3.2.47 Notwithstanding the success of this approach the Commission's observation is that within Bristol, there is no one group or individual charged with working to unlock these stalled site assets; and often no join up of public investment and support with the explicit intention of unlocking such assets.

'It's about having the ability to talk to people about the key issues...there should be a stalled sites officer who can take a lead' (Developer)

- 3.2.48 We consider this to be a missed opportunity and so make a recommendation as follows:

Recommendation 6 – Establish a specialist stalled site unlocking team

The Commission recommends that within the Council a specialist unlocking team is set up, supported by the HCA, to target and systematically unlock these difficult housing sites with targeted and tailored interventions.

This would include, in particular, those empty offices which have obtained deemed consent under permitted development rights for conversion to housing, but which are now 'stuck' because the sole purpose was to increase the asset value.

3.3 Planning for housing delivery

Planning, place, renewal and challenge

- 3.3.1 Planning policy nationally and in Bristol, has struggled to deliver sufficient new homes sufficiently quickly to keep pace with rising demand. Effective planning policy and practice is a key part of the agenda for delivering more homes, faster homes.
- 3.3.2 This includes delivering more affordable homes and enabling the development of great sustainable places – something for which Bristol is renowned.
- 3.3.3 Bristol is a city that is undergoing much positive change and renewal. Many excellent new places have been developed over the last decade e.g. in and around the Harbourside area, Cabot Circus and the Temple Quarter. These and other places successfully combine homes, retail, and commercial offices with Bristol's natural advantages including its waterways. The impact is reinvigorating places that were previously tired and had lost their focus and purpose.
- 3.3.4 Challenges remain as the process of change and renewal continues. These challenges include dealing effectively with the stalled, derelict or empty, commercial buildings, which blight some neighbourhoods in the city as the Citizens Panel told us.
- 3.3.5 Of course, whilst planning policy and practice must enable the creation of great new places, it must do so whilst also enabling sufficient new homes of all tenures. This is an important and ongoing challenge as not everyone who aspires to live in the Greater Bristol area can live within the tightly drawn boundaries of Bristol City.
- 3.3.6 The national planning policy context has been continually changing including the introduction of a new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), neighbourhood plans and permitted development rights for example to change offices to residential without planning permission.
- 3.3.7 In Bristol we are seeing a significant number of pre notifications of these changes of use which we expect to bring forward new homes supply so long as the residential market remains strong and the office market in these locations remains relatively weak.

Encouraging the development of an alternative sector for innovation in new homes delivery

- 3.3.8 Generally speaking, planning can help control and mitigate the negative impacts of development when housing and property markets are strong but planning struggles to maintain housing supply and deliver new homes through the recession.

- 3.3.9 In particular, on larger sites, delivery of new homes is limited by the pace at which house builders can sell their standard house types and other sites become stalled either because of viability, other issues or the financial expectations and preferences of the landowner.
- 3.3.10 In order to maximise the flow of new homes, it is important that sites with planning permission for new homes should be developed out as quickly as possible. But achieving this in practice is very difficult – as evidenced by the fall off in new homes supply in the years following the 2008 recession.
- 3.3.11 A key contributor to this difficulty is the housing market dependence on the traditional house builders and developers to provide new homes for sale and, on larger sites, an acceptable level of affordable homes and other community contributions.
- 3.3.12 When housing markets are strong this system works relatively well. But when housing and property markets are uncertain or weak, particularly when there is also more restrictive lending for property and housing ventures, new homes supply quickly reduces and sites become stalled.
- 3.3.13 Custom Build housing, subsidised housing and homes for institutional market rent, for example, could all deliver housing much faster than volume house builder market sale of standard house types.
- 3.3.14 A key issue is that these homes are sold, often off plan, to owners and investors so that the financial viability of the schemes are assured and the risk reduced, from a very early stage.

A role for Custom Build Homes

- 3.3.15 One of the alternative housing delivery models, Custom Build is particularly attractive and complements Bristol's excellent reputation for individual and group self-build and co-housing.
- 3.3.16 Bristol is a leader in self-build and the Commission supports continued provision through the planning system and public land disposals of individual plots for local self-builders. Self-build is often confused with Custom Build but the two are different.
- 3.3.17 Custom Build requires larger sites, 100 homes or more, to be economically viable and in areas where there are sufficient numbers of larger sites, it can provide around 40-50% of the total homes supply in that area. This compares with 10% for self-build and similar amounts of institutional market rent.

...And for Community Led Housing

- 3.3.18 The Commission believes that community led housing projects can also make a useful contribution to the supply of new affordable homes. Stakeholder feedback suggests such projects can also have a very positive role to play in fostering support for new homes in communities.

- 3.3.19 The Commission believes it would be helpful to pilot a variety of types of delivery such as Community Land Trusts and community share issues. They can also enable sites to come forward for development via a partnership approach between community agencies and residents as seen in various parts of the City such as Redcliffe, St Werberghs, St Pauls and Lockleaze.
- 3.3.20 The Commission's view is that this 'alternative' housing sector offers a potential opportunity not just to make a contribution to more homes faster homes but also to nurture ambition and create a competitive advantage and centre of excellence in Bristol.
- 3.3.21 Over the longer term, developing a vibrant alternative housing sector in Bristol which includes models of new homes supply such as Custom Build, Self Build, Low Cost Modular Housing as well as Institutional Market Rent could complement the existing volume house building sector and substantially increase the number of market homes delivered and the housing options that are available.
- 3.3.22 This alternative housing sector is so-far, low volume and of limited impact in Bristol but experience in other places, especially in Europe, suggests there is an opportunity and that ways to grow this potential over the next few years are worth exploring.
- 3.3.23 For this to happen, the Council, in practical ways through the planning system, public sector land owners and the Homes and Communities Agency would have to show an increased level of interest and commitment to facilitate innovation and investment in and by these sectors.
- 3.3.24 The Commission's expectation is that it will be necessary to take some measured risk compared with the traditional developer route. This will create the conditions in which these alternative (non-mainstream developer) housing sector delivery models can thrive and community agencies can partner with other organisations such as housing associations and manufacturers and develop the expertise needed to deliver sustainable and repeatable schemes.
- 3.3.25 Our recommendations in this area recognises that in the short and medium term, expanding and developing a thriving alternative sector may have a limited impact to deliver the 'more homes' priority of the Commission but – certainly for Custom build – there is potential to deliver 'faster homes'.

Recommendation 7 – Developing and nurturing an alternative homes sector

The Commission recommends that the Council and the Homes & Communities Agency develop a strategy to encourage and support innovation in developing sustainable, scalable and repeatable alternative models of new homes supply in Bristol that includes Custom Build, Institutional Market Rent, Self Build and Modular Housing.

This strategy should include some larger housing sites being allocated by condition to include Custom Build and Institutional Market Rent with an element reserved for three years' worth of build for market sale.

The Commission recommends that within 6 months, where a neighbourhood plan has been prepared and approved communities should be actively encouraged to use the Community Right to Build or other mechanisms such as CLT to bring the development to fruition.

In the short term it is also suggested that the Council or the HCA host a workshop to consider in more depth the opportunities, issues, activity and current capacity in Bristol that could enable some further pilot schemes.

Affordable housing and the financial dynamics of the housing market

3.3.26 The housing market is currently changing very quickly and will always change more quickly than planning policy. The Commission believes that Bristol's planners need better tools to allow them to do the best for Bristol whatever the state of the housing market and to enable them to be able to react more immediately to changing market conditions.

3.3.27 Currently the Bristol Core Strategy requirement for affordable housing is not being achieved. One key reason is that in Bristol, either land values for housing development are too low (particularly in south Bristol) to cross subsidise affordable housing from the land value of market housing or, in the centre and high value areas of Bristol, the existing use values are too high to be viable for redevelopment that includes low cost housing.

3.3.28 Key to understanding this financial dynamic is an appreciation of the uncomfortable truth that delivering affordable housing requires significant subsidy, in whatever form that takes. Without this subsidy affordable housing cannot be delivered.

3.3.29 This subsidy either comes from the land value; from a housing association (HA puts in financial contributions from their resources); from the local authority (discounted public land and/or a financial contribution from their resources); or from central government (via capital grant channelled through the Homes & Communities Agency). More usually, the subsidy is a combination of the above sources.

3.3.30 The last few years has been characterised by a combination of events which together have formed a 'perfect storm' affecting all of the above subsidy sources and resulting in major reductions in the numbers of affordable homes delivered in Bristol (less than 100 in 2013/14).

3.3.31 The main events have been; -

- site viability issues leading to mothballing and stalled sites, which have in turn led to a renegotiation of s106 contributions for affordable housing;

- cuts to local authority funding and budgets increasing the pressure on LA's to sell potential housing land for full market value to support their other services and investment plans;
- greater pressure on housing associations to do 'more for less' and invest more in supporting their existing tenants and communities e.g. in managing the impact of welfare reform;
- big reductions in central government capital grant for affordable housing – both in absolute terms and grant per home.

3.3.32 What this means, as confirmed by our expert witnesses from the house building sector and from housing associations, is that every time they build a new affordable home they lose money and these losses must be managed and absorbed.

3.3.33 The practical impact for developers is that delivering affordable homes as part of a scheme can make it unviable (i.e. the scheme delivers insufficient profit as required by the developer business model) and therefore is at risk of not being progressed.

3.3.34 The practical impact for housing associations is that to keep their annual new homes subsidy budget at a safe business level they must develop a lower number of 'loss making' affordable homes than previously was the case.

3.3.35 This introduces a critical policy issue and a tension – Bristol needs more homes of all tenure types – for open market sale, shared ownership, market rent, affordable rent – but insisting on producing more affordable homes may result in Bristol producing fewer total homes including homes of other tenures.

Reviewing planning policy, market assessment and sub regional collaboration

3.3.36 Following the above commentary it will be apparent that difficult choices have to be made through the planning system between the volume of new homes and the mix of new homes.

'I'm a passionate advocate for affordable housing but you will have to reduce the percentage you require for each site and grant planning permissions for twice as many sites' (large developer)

3.3.37 The view of the Commission is that the most immediate priority is to build as many new homes and quality places as possible whilst building up capacity to deliver more affordable new homes over the longer term.

3.3.38 To do this the planning system should seek to achieve a housing mix that maximises total homes delivery in the short term and maximises affordable homes delivery over time.

3.3.39 As previously noted, the Core Strategy numbers have not been delivered for affordable housing. The Commission's view is that to support development of coherent strategies, plans and planning policies for delivering new homes and places over the longer term, targets for total numbers of new homes and for

tenure mix, including the numbers of new affordable homes, must be underpinned by a robust evidence base.

3.3.40 The best way to achieve this is to have an agreed Core Strategy that is fully congruent with an up to date and sound Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). The SHMA preparation is being undertaken collaboratively by the four unitary authorities with the backing of the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership. Moreover as we note in the background (Section 3.1.9) Bristol is part of a wider housing market which operates, at least in the private rental and owner-occupied sectors, without regard to administrative boundaries. The logical consequence of there being a sub-regional housing market is that there needs to be a sub-regional approach to planning for both market and non-market sectors.

3.3.41 Our stakeholder event strongly endorsed the need for the four local authorities to act together in the interests of all citizens, if needs are to be met and the economy is to flourish. Thus we very much welcome the transformation of the Planning Homes & Communities Board from an advisory board into an Executive Board of the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership. If a sub-regional planning approach is not taken, with appropriate judgements made about the balancing of supply and demand, then those least able to meet their housing needs are the most likely to lose out.

3.3.42 Our recommendations are therefore as follows:-

Recommendation 8 – Prioritise delivery of more homes in the short term and more affordable homes over the longer term

The Commission recommends that the Council reviews its planning policy and actively considers how it can best use its planning powers in relation to housing mix and affordable housing to maximise new homes delivery in the short term and maximise affordable homes delivery over time.

One suggestion would be that on new planning permissions, for the next three years or such earlier date as the Council decides based on achievement of housing targets, affordable housing will only be required either where there is sufficient grant, land or other subsidy to achieve viability or on specific sites identified through area action plans or neighbourhood plans.

Recommendation 9 - Ensure new homes planning targets over the longer term are both supported by robust evidence and are planned for on a sub-regional basis

Once the SHMA is completed the Commission recommends that that the Council brings forward and carries out a review of its Core Strategy and that all four West of England authorities collaborate to review all Core Strategies working to a common set of policy goals.

Further comments to support planning policy changes

- 3.3.43 To support these two recommendations our advice to the Mayor and Cabinet would be to take the following matters into consideration.
- 3.3.44 The Commission believes it is critical that the SHMA is completed urgently. Changes to the detailed planning policy should then be based on the Strategic Housing Market Assessment.
- 3.3.45 Both the SHMA and resultant changes to planning policy should reflect the relative demand for housing across different tenures e.g. open market housing, market rent, shared ownership, affordable housing for rent.
- 3.3.46 There should also be an assessment of potential build out rates for different delivery types and markets including for custom build which, as previously noted, has the potential on larger sites to deliver 'faster homes'.
- 3.3.47 Planning agreements, which should be in a standard format, should consider making greater use of overage arrangements particularly during a rising housing market. In practice this would mean requiring developers to pay an agreed share (e.g. 50%) of their scheme profits over a gross margin hurdle level which the planning authority will set for each project in negotiation with the developer. The Commission understands that in London a number of councils and developers have agreed 'open-book' s.106 agreements. If this has not happened in Bristol then it is worthy of consideration.
- 3.3.48 As part of the formal pre-application process the Council could provide confidential assessments of existing use value for all sites. These could allow 10% above these values to encourage the release of sites for homes in the assessments of profit hurdle rates.
- 3.3.49 The Council should use the overage money from 'supernormal profits' to support a Revolving Infrastructure Fund for the delivery of more housing sites as proposed in section 3.2 (Land and site supply) and for top-up subsidy for delivering additional affordable homes.

Developing Bristol as a proactive 'open for business' and can-do planning authority

- 3.3.50 Depending on the success of this approach to raise additional funds the Council could use the RIF flexibly in a variety of ways. These could include providing construction or infrastructure support for stranded sites; subsidy for new affordable homes; financing of mortgages, securing planning permissions; undertaking site acquisitions etc.
- 3.3.51 The detail and specifics will of course require in depth examination. However the principle is all about enabling the planning system to be proactive, flexible and can-do in the approach to supporting delivery of more homes, faster homes.

- 3.3.52 The Commission is not advocating an ‘anything goes’ approach in pursuit of as many new homes as possible. Making new homes part of high quality places that respect and enhance the unique qualities of Bristol is an essential pre-requisite and very often adds financial value, as well as a real sense of place and social value.
- 3.3.53 Proactive planning is central to achieving this and planning should be linked to scheme specific requirements such as mixed use, sustainability and design. A proactive planning authority, with an interest in the best outcomes for the community and the financial outcomes from the project and with the financial firepower to influence these, is better placed to achieve its goals than a regulatory driven system.
- 3.3.54 Being clear, as early as possible in the development process, through design briefs agreed interdepartmentally within the council and with the community which are well advised on viability in relation to existing use values, is another key element of this approach. Urban design quality, sustainability, housing standards, allocations to local people and community leadership are key to the local acceptability of new housing.
- 3.3.55 Implementation of the organisational leadership and systems changes we recommend in section 3.4 will be important and will underpin this change.

Compulsory Purchase Orders

- 3.3.56 Site acquisitions by compulsory purchase orders (CPO) are a last resort and in England they would be significantly more effective if they were cheaper, quicker and easier to prove like the US style ‘quicktake’ system.
- 3.3.57 Ideally, the Commission would like to see a radical overhaul of the CPO system so that these powers become a more realistic and effective method for making available development sites on vacant and derelict sites and buildings that are not being brought forward without good reason.
- 3.3.58 Whilst the Commission recognises the practical difficulties with using CPO’s, we are nevertheless recommending that the potential of their more widespread use to unlock significant derelict and vacant sites as well as long-term empty buildings is explored.

Recommendation 10 – Compulsory Purchase Orders

The Commission considers that there is a case for more compulsion where sites have remained undeveloped for several years or where site assembly across different ownerships is required. At the same time the Commission recognises the lengthy, bureaucratic and costly nature of current prescribed processes:

i) The Government is recommended to urgently review and simplify either primary or secondary legislation associated with CPOs. One option is to consider the US ‘Quick Take’ linked to non-payment of land taxes.

- ii) The Commission recommends that the Council examine how it can be more active in its approach to the use of CPO's to ensure that potential housing sites that are being unreasonably stalled are unlocked.*
- iii) The HCA is recommended to actively use its own, somewhat simpler, CPO powers in collaboration with the City Council.*

3.3.59 There may be a useful role for the Bristol Property Board in identifying such sites and also by community groups as recommended by Locality and their Campaign Against Delinquent Owners.

3.4 Leadership and systems

3.4.1 Throughout the course of the Commission's work we have consistently heard from witnesses about the potential to improve housing delivery and supply that would result from a clear and consistent leadership culture that focuses on achieving measurable new homes supply outcomes supported by smarter, more effective systems and processes.

3.4.2 This applies not just to the Council but to other key partners, all of whom should be regarded as 'system leaders'. Homes4Bristol, the strategic housing partnership has the potential to fulfil this role. At the May 2014 Stakeholder Event a number of key partners made pledges about their system leadership role.

Creating a results-not-process culture of entrepreneurial delivery

3.4.3 Very positively, there is good evidence of a new leadership culture within the highest levels of the City Council that recognises the scale of the housing crisis, signals an openness to change and is supportive of strategies and plans to increase the supply of new homes.

3.4.4 This new leadership culture is expressed in various adopted reports and policy and practice statements for example, the Mayor's 'A Vision for Bristol', in the Affordable Housing Delivery Framework and in the intent shown by the setting up of this Homes Commission.

3.4.5 Sustaining robust civic leadership support for 'more housing, faster housing' should be a more achievable outcome now that Bristol had an elected Mayor. But it will remain important to ensure that housing issues – including the critical importance of being ambitious in the delivery of new homes of all tenure types and in the creation of great places to live are vocalised with clear and consistent messages.

3.4.6 The new leadership culture is very welcome and creates an opportunity for the Council's senior leadership team to deliver positive change underpinned by a collective focus on delivering results – our mantra of 'more homes, faster homes'.

"What we want to see from the Council is a leadership culture of delivery, delivery, delivery" (Homes Commission member summarising evidence from witnesses)

3.4.7 But there needs to be change in the Council – and this is a clear message borne out from what we have heard from our expert witnesses. In summary, the evidence shows that the practical impact of the new results orientated leadership culture at the top of the Council has yet to be translated into attitudes and day to day actions across City Council departments and by middle managers and service team leaders.

- 3.4.8 Put another way, there is currently a perceptions gap and lack of congruence between the high level leadership messages and the practical behaviours, actions and impact from managers & staff on the ground.
- 3.4.9 Our assessment is that the kernel issue is a prevalent culture in key areas of the council's housing delivery systems that is more orientated towards managing processes than it is towards the delivering measurable results – more homes, faster homes – that is demanded by the scale of the current housing crisis.

“Lead officers and different departments singing off the same hymn sheet is important” (RP affordable housing developer)

- 3.4.10 This is a crucial issue as it is the middle tier of Council management who have a (if not the) major impact on the day to day operation of housing delivery systems.
- 3.4.11 Whilst changing culture and behaviours is recognised as a leadership challenge, addressing this issue with middle managers and service team leaders provides a significant opportunity for the Council's leadership team.
- 3.4.12 Simply put, that opportunity is to focus the Council's limited resources more effectively as a strategic enabling and delivery partner and by sweating its assets so as to be doing the right things – which is not the same as doing things right.
- 3.4.13 The Commission anticipates that embedding this change in culture and attitude throughout service delivery teams will have a positive impact on the supply of new homes and on the perception of current and potential investors that Bristol genuinely is a City that is open for business.

Seek and exploit opportunities for new homes supply rather than minimising risk

- 3.4.14 An issue arising from the evidence we have heard and which chimes with the experience of Commission members, is that there is often a risk averse culture in some parts of the Council. The evidence suggests that excessive caution and risk aversion can frequently be at odds with ensuring new homes are delivered in a timely fashion.
- 3.4.15 This risk averse culture is also at odds with the leadership messaging around Bristol being a 'can-do' city that is 'open for business'. To be 'can-do', in practice rather than on paper in pursuit of social, financial and economic benefits, measured risks have to be taken by the Council working with its partners.
- 3.4.16 For this reason the Commission would like to see a leadership culture that supports the adoption of a more opportunity seeking, less risk averse culture and which visibly fosters an entrepreneurial approach to driving forward the delivery of more homes, faster homes.

3.4.17 Our recommendation is therefore as follows:

Recommendation 11 - Creating a 'Results-not-Process' Culture

With regard to delivery of new homes BCC should place greater emphasis on driving through a 'results-not-process' culture change and which is supportive of a more entrepreneurial can-do and less risk averse approach to the delivery of more homes, faster homes. The change process to achieve this outcome should be led by the council's Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

This will have the greatest impact when combined with measures (see R12) that lead to a visible reduction and elimination of process & policy barriers that add cost, time and risk to developer & registered provider housing proposals, without any significant related housing supply benefits.

Introduce end-to-end programme management

3.4.18 A very practical issue that has emerged in our enquiries is around the Council's systems and processes.

"Developing in Bristol is hard work compared to other LA's, you need tenacity and to play the long game" (RP affordable housing developer)

3.4.19 Witnesses report how different departmental and manager priorities, systems, and measures of success can combine to introduce difficulty, delay, cost and resource waste in the housing delivery system without any related housing supply benefits.

3.4.20 These delays and costs fall on the Council as well as on their development partners – both private sector developers and Registered Providers.

3.4.21 Design and development of cleaner, leaner systems for delivering new homes therefore represents a significant opportunity to drive out costly waste and improve productivity for all involved in the new homes delivery process as well as achieving the objective of more homes, faster homes.

3.4.22 One positive change would be for the Council to approach the delivery of housing schemes as projects and programmes to be effectively and robustly managed from start to finish. The experience of witnesses is that scheme delivery is too often treated as a series of departmental 'pass the parcel' activities and these activities include too many multi-departmental impact assessments. This, it is suggested by witnesses is another reflection of the risk minimisation culture rather than the opportunity seeking culture now needed.

"The perception of BCC is better than it was a few years ago but people still think it's hard to develop in Bristol. A new council person comes in with a

different opinion and you can be back to square one with all that abortive work and delays” (RP affordable housing developer)

- 3.4.23 The view of the Commission is that there are major benefits to the Council and to its partners to be gained from implementing a system of ‘conception to delivery’ programme management. The authority, responsibility and accountability for delivering new homes outcomes should be vested in officers whose job success measures are clearly around delivering outcomes and tangible results - not the management of process.
- 3.4.24 One way to give practical effect to improving programme and project management would be for the Council to commission a ‘conception to delivery’ redesign of systems across all departments that touch the housing delivery and planning process (e.g. using Systems Thinking (Lean) Methodology).
- 3.4.25 The aim is to simplify procedures, reduce waste, time, cost and focus on eliminating all activities and steps in the process that do not directly contribute to the system purpose - the outcome of more homes, faster homes.
- 3.4.26 The benefits from implementing leaner, less wasteful systems would be further enhanced by the Council identifying and empowering Housing Delivery Programme Managers (HDPM’s) to pull schemes through departmental systems and overcome blockages.
- 3.4.27 HDPM’s would benefit from access to high level political and officer support in achieving this outcome. HDPM’s should be given the authority to take measured compliance risks so as to prioritise the speed and volume of new homes delivery over the minimising of risk and compliance with process.
- 3.4.28 Our recommendation is as follows:

Recommendation 12 - Introduce end-to-end programme management

To realise efficiency and supply benefits the Commission recommends that the Council carry out a ‘conception to delivery’ review of existing housing delivery systems and implement lean systems of project and programme management.

The Commission also recommends that the authority, responsibility and accountability for delivering new housing and place making outcomes is vested in officers whose performance measures are clearly defined around delivering housing outcomes and not about management of process and minimising risk.

The emphasis should be on simplifying procedures, reducing waste, time, cost and focusing on eliminating activities that do not directly contribute to the outcome of delivering ‘more housing, faster housing’.

Ensuring the Council's organisational arrangements for housing delivery are effective

3.4.29 The Council has recently put in place a new directorate structure covering Neighbourhoods, People, Place and Business Change, as well as an Affordable Housing Delivery Board (AHDB).

3.4.30 A key feature of these new arrangements is that responsibility for all housing related activities is divided between three directorates with the AHDB 'holding the ring'. In particular whilst we welcome the AHDB as an accountable body we note that its remit only covers affordable housing delivery rather than all housing delivery.

3.4.31 It is too early to determine the impact of this new arrangement on achievement of the Commission's central 'more homes, faster homes' objective.

3.4.32 For this reason the Commission has raised a recommendation as follows:

Recommendation 13: Post implementation review of new organisational arrangements

The Commission recommends that the impact and effectiveness of the Council's new directorate structure arrangements in enabling the objective of more homes, faster homes are reviewed after a year in use, or sooner if there are indications that there are no positive, or adverse, impacts on the delivery of new homes.

Ensuring accountability and scrutiny for implementation of the Affordable Housing Delivery Framework

3.4.33 In December 2013 the Council approved a new Affordable Housing Delivery Framework (AHDF). This is one indicator of the seriousness with which Council leaders are taking the new homes supply crisis and of their determination to find solutions and take action.

3.4.34 The Commission believes it is vitally important that implementation of the AHDF is closely monitored and led by an accountable senior Council officer reporting directly to the Assistant Mayor with responsibility for housing.

3.4.35 Consideration should also be given to external scrutiny of progress to deliver the AHDF. This could for example, be provided by the Bristol Housing Partnership or Homes4Bristol

3.4.36 Our recommendation is as follows:

Recommendation 14 – Ensure robust accountability and scrutiny for implementation of the Affordable Housing Delivery Framework

The Commission recommends that an Assistant Mayor is made

accountable for delivery of the Affordable Housing Delivery Framework and that to assist them in carrying out this responsibility they have a Senior Officer responsible for its implementation.

The Commission also recommends that progress in implementation of the AHDF is subject to external scrutiny by an appropriate body and that this is reflected in their Terms of Reference.

3.5 Making best use of strategic assets

- 3.5.1 The scale of the crisis in housing supply in Bristol and its adverse impact on the life chances of Bristol people demands an urgent search for solutions that goes beyond traditional, safe ways of thinking.
- 3.5.2 The time is right for consideration of all potential lines of inquiry so as to ensure that the Council makes best use of all of its assets in pursuit of the goal of more homes faster homes.
- 3.5.3 Earlier parts of this report have considered and made recommendations on the key issue of land and site supply including Council and other public sector land – the most important asset in unlocking additional housing supply.
- 3.5.4 This section makes four recommendations on how best use can be made from two other major Council assets: its retained council housing stock and potential borrowing capacity and the land assets owned by the Council and held in its general account.

Making best use of the Council's retained housing stock and owned land

- 3.5.5 The Council continues to own and manage some 28,000 council homes. Over the next 15 years the Council has an ambition to develop c1,000 new council homes all of which would be let at social rent levels. The development of more council housing and quality places is an ambition fully supported by the Commission, as well as by the Citizens Panel.
- 3.5.6 However, from evidence to the Commission it is clear that there are some significant challenges that restrict the volume of new council homes that can be developed by the Council's Landlord Services (now retitled Housing Delivery).
- 3.5.7 The key challenges are; the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Debt Cap; the ability of Landlord Services to access Council owned land; the distribution of Right To Buy stock across the Council's owned estates; significant challenges inherent in the Council's retained stock profile and its financial performance

The HRA Debt Cap

- 3.5.8 The Housing Revenue Account debt cap is an issue because it limits new Council borrowing to invest in new homes to only £12 million, an amount that is insufficient to deliver a development programme on the scale appropriate to the housing crisis.
- 3.5.9 The cap results from central government policies and is something which adversely affects many other local authorities and similarly constrains their new homes development ambitions.
- 3.5.10 In the absence of the debt cap the Council could develop a significantly greater volume of self-financing council homes. That is to say, the income on

these new homes should fully service the interest costs of the additional borrowings.

Access by Landlord Services to Council owned land and property assets held in its General Account

- 3.5.11 Evidence given to the Commission shows that the Council owns or otherwise has control of significant amounts of land and property assets which are held in its General Account.
- 3.5.12 One significance of this designation is that these assets are not readily available to the Council's Landlord Services to enable the delivery of new council homes.
- 3.5.13 The Council has set itself a target of raising an annual capital sum each year from the sale of General Account land and property assets. The Commission recognises the need for the Council to raise capital from land and property sales to support its financial position.
- 3.5.14 However, given the depth and scale of the housing crisis the Commission believes that the time is right for there to be a review of the land and property assets held in the general account. The purpose of this review is to reach a clear understanding on how much developable land is held in the General Account that could potentially be used to support additional new housing supply either by BCC Landlord Services or by external partners.
- 3.5.15 A related issue is that whilst the Council can transfer land in its General Account to an external Registered Provider at a discount to market value, local authority rules mean that the Council cannot make a transfer to its own Landlord Services on the same basis – any transfer from the general account must be at market value.
- 3.5.16 The rules around HRA Debt caps and transfers between General account and Housing Revenue Account are set by central government and so effecting change in a reasonable timescale will be difficult.
- 3.5.17 However both of these issues put the development position of the Council's Landlord Services at a competitive and financial disadvantage compared with Registered Providers whose ability to borrow is constrained only by their ability to service debt from their income and to provide adequate security for their loans.
- 3.5.18 The practical impact of both the HRA Debt Cap and the financial rules over transfers of discounted land from one Council account to another is that the Council is severely limited in the numbers of new council homes it can build
- 3.5.19 The view of the Commission is that at a time of housing crisis these central government rules are unhelpful and mitigate against the reasonable ambitions of the Council to invest, through prudent borrowing and value for money use of its land assets, in developing new council homes - long term infrastructure.

These new homes would be appreciating assets given the prosperity and success of Bristol as a high demand place to live and work.

3.5.20 Two recommendations flow from this:-

Recommendation 15 - Government should raise or eliminate the HRA borrowing cap imposed upon the Council and it should enable land and other asset transfers from general account to HRA account on the same basis as available to Registered Providers

The Commission notes with concern the detrimental impact to the supply of new affordable homes in Bristol resulting from nationally imposed restrictions on debt and borrowing caps and on the requirement for transfer of land and assets from general account to the HRA to be at market value.

The Commission notes clear benefits to the supply of new council homes from raising the HRA borrowing cap and thereby unlocking additional borrowing capacity and also from enabling the transfer of land from general account to the HRA at a discounted value.

The Commission is of the view that where new HRA debt is fully serviced through rental income and is an investment in an appreciating infrastructure asset such as new homes, then this should not be treated as a public borrowing liability. Similarly where the value of a discounted land transfer unlocks Council investment in new homes then this subsidy should also be treated as an investment in new homes

For these reasons the Commission strongly supports actions that may lead to a change in government policy on this issue including lobbying by Council leaders and bodies such as the Local Government Association and the National Housing Federation.

Recommendation 16: Council Wide Review of Land and Property Assets for Potential Housing Development

The Commission recommends that a project / process is put in place to reach a clear understanding on how much developable land is held in the General Account that could potentially be used to support additional new housing supply either by BCC Landlord Services or by external partners.

Once this has been determined then a plan should be developed and implemented to support the value for money release of this land for new housing use.

The impact of Right To Buy Sales on potential estate regeneration activities

3.5.21 The Commission notes that the distribution of Right To Buy stock across the Council's Landlord owned estates means it is difficult and more costly to master plan and implement large scale estate regeneration schemes – either directly or via stock transfer.

3.5.22 Promoting potential solutions to increasing the supply of new homes such as increasing the density of council owned estates are therefore much easier said than done.

3.5.23 The Commission's view is that whilst the Council should remain alive to any opportunities that may arise in this regard, the practical complexities are such that developing a programme of large scale estate regeneration can only be considered to offer long term possibilities to favourably impact on new homes supply.

Making best use of the Council's housing assets and unlocking access to additional borrowing capacity

3.5.24 Evidence to the Commission shows that there are significant challenges inherent in the Council's retained stock profile and its financial performance.

3.5.25 For example these challenges arise from large numbers of flatted schemes; a significant proportion (c30%) of 'liability' stock with a negative Net Present Value; and a requirement to tackle a significant planned repairs backlog to meet the reasonable expectations of both the Council and of its tenants

3.5.26 In recent years the Council's Landlord Services Team has made excellent progress to address some substantial legacy challenges including significant financial challenges. The view of the Commission is that overall Landlord Services is now in a much better place than it was a few years ago. This is good news and positive.

3.5.27 The Commission is also of the view that the Council's retained housing portfolio is, overall, a significant asset and that the Council should very robustly seek to make best use of the Council's housing assets particularly in respect of looking for new ways to unlock access to additional borrowing capacity with which to develop more affordable homes.

3.5.28 The Commission was especially interested in the Citizens Panel Consultation outcome in respect of council stock retention / stock transfer. Some 64% of respondents (of which there were 900) strongly or slightly agreed that *'the Council should consider moving control of some of its council housing to another organisation, such as a wholly owned council company or not for profit landlord, if that results in it being able to raise more money to build more new homes'*.

3.5.29 Only 20% of people strongly or slightly disagreed with this and 16% neither agreed nor disagreed. Interestingly, of the six proposals put to the Citizens Panel this was the one with the greatest support.

3.5.30 The Commission makes the following recommendations:

<p><i>Recommendation 17 - Complete the Housing Revenue Account Asset Review to examine the impact of releasing some stock to create more</i></p>

new homes

- i) *We recommend that the Council's Landlord Services continue to resource and invest in development of the Strategic Asset Management model so as to gain a comprehensive understanding of the current and future performance of all of the retained housing stock and to support an ongoing programme of active asset management.*
- ii) *This active asset management would include giving consideration to the disposal of negative value housing stock so that the net disposal proceeds can be used to develop new council homes. We recognise that the size and shape of any disposal portfolio will need to be determined through an iterative process that considers a range of factors including the social amenity, the HRA impact and the open market value of the stock alongside the potential benefits from reinvesting all or part of the sales proceeds in the development of new affordable housing*
- iii) *We also recommend that the Council's Landlord Services considers (as part of its Strategic Asset Management work) carrying out a transparent and robust assessment of the impact of continuing with its current policy of stock retention (including the impact on the retained Landlord Service and the HRA Account) on the ability of the Council to enable the development of new affordable homes over and above current planned levels.*

A key aim is to understand and identify whether there is a portfolio of stock that, through the mechanism of a stock transfer, has the potential to unlock access to significant additional private finance borrowing capacity. This additional borrowing would support additional investment in any non-retained stock and the capability of any stock transfer organisation to develop new affordable homes.

Recommendation 18 - Fully examine the Municipal Housing Company model

The Localism Act provides Councils with a new 'general power of competence' and this gives local authorities greater freedom to innovate - including the ability to set up municipal housing companies. There are a number of examples of local authorities at varying stages of pursuing this option.

These companies, whilst independent, can be wholly owned by councils. The indications are that they are able to borrow outside of the restrictions of local authority borrowing caps. Councils across the country are setting up such companies which allow the development of mixed tenures and do not have to permit the Right to Buy.

The Commission believes that the opportunity to establish a Municipal

Housing Company (MHC) in Bristol may offer a promising area for exploration to increase the supply of affordable homes and should be given serious consideration.

- 3.5.31 Bringing empty homes back into use is not a net addition to overall supply. It nonetheless represents a cost effective way of making more homes available to be lived in. The Commission has heard evidence that the Council has been effective at bringing empty homes back into use and reducing the overall vacancy rate. It may be possible to do more, and in response to this issue being raised by many Citizens Panel respondents the Council is asked to consider further changes to Council Tax to further encourage owners of empty homes to bring them into use.

Recommendation 19 – Review action to bring more empty private homes into use

The Commission recognises that the Council has been very effective at bringing empty private homes back into use. However in response to concern about this issue by the Citizens Panel it recommends that work is undertaken on whether there would be a positive effect on reducing ‘empties’ of further increasing Council Tax on such properties.

3.6 Funding the delivery of new homes, subsidy and affordability

Overall conclusion – finance availability and cost is not a limiting factor

- 3.6.1 The Commission took evidence from a range of funding providers so as to understand whether access to finance was a significant impediment to the delivery of new homes in Bristol.
- 3.6.2 Our conclusion is that the availability finance is not a major barrier to the supply of new homes. There is a range of funders – including banks and institutional investors – who between them are willing and able to provide short, medium and long term finance at a cost that makes sense to both parties to support housing delivery.
- 3.6.3 Organisations have to be a good credit risk, able to provide appropriate loan security and the underlying schemes have to be viable in the context of the organisations business model. But that is as would be expected in any commercial lending situation.

The funding market for Registered Providers and developers

- 3.6.4 At the start of our work in November 2013 the Commission believed there would be some issues and recommendations required around finance, particularly for house buyers and developers. Our review with expert witnesses, given the economic recovery and a significant strengthening in the housing market, has shown that access to finance is not a significant issue.
- 3.6.5 A key factor leading to recent reductions in numbers of new homes as a whole developed in Bristol (as elsewhere) was the 2008/09 credit crunch and resulting economic downturn. The fall in the numbers of new homes developed for sale and, therefore, in the numbers of affordable homes to rent, compounded a situation where Bristol was already having to deal with a major shortfall between the demand for and supply of new homes. Key facts on this are given in section 3.1.
- 3.6.6 There has been a remarkable turnaround in housing market optimism and in the available of finance over the life of the Commission. The major developing Registered Providers in Bristol are reporting few problems with accessing new loans and / or long term debt finance.
- 3.6.7 For development finance and construction, financial providers are showing an increasing appetite to support viable proposals. The clear message from the larger developers is that by robustly managing their performance in line with their business models they can retain the support of their funders and deliver new supply.
- 3.6.8 In terms of funding costs, the last five years have seen overall debt costs remain stable and affordable. The benefits of historic lows in bank base rate / LIBOR rates have in part been offset by increased interest margins and potentially too, by funders offering only shorter term debt. This reflects

financial institutions having to increase their margins to cover significantly increased capital costs following tighter financial sector regulation.

- 3.6.9 A positive trend is that the options now available for developers have increased as traditional providers, including the major banks, become more active in finance supply. Over recent years new long term lenders have emerged and by offering new debt instruments to lower risk borrowers notably Registered Providers they have been key in enabling the delivery of new affordable homes.
- 3.6.10 Government support to encourage funders to lend to developers and other businesses, especially smaller businesses has been significant over recent years. This support includes schemes such as Funding for Lending - although some commentators assess the practical impact as limited.
- 3.6.11 The other key form of funding for new affordable homes is capital grant funding provided by government through the Homes & Communities Agency. We say more about this later in this section.
- 3.6.12 For Local Authorities, additional borrowing comes via the Public Works Loan Board (PWLb). Whilst the costs are competitive, for Bristol the ability of the Council to increase borrowings is limited to an additional £12 million. The adverse impact of the HRA Debt Cap on the Council's ability to maximise its potential contribution to new affordable homes supply has already been commented on in section 3.5

Access to funding to support home buyers is becoming more challenging

- 3.6.13 A range of government measures have helped stimulate new home buyer activity in the market. These include the Help to Buy I and II schemes which has assisted a meaningful number of first time buyers get on the housing ladder with more favourable mortgage deals and with lower deposits.
- 3.6.14 The headline driver for government behind HTB has been to stimulate an increase in the supply of homes. Whilst there is some evidence that this is now happening, the scheme has been criticised by many market commentators who point to an overheating housing market in some parts of the country.
- 3.6.15 The impact of this stronger housing market is that in areas of the country including Bristol, house prices have increased faster than average earnings so that far from it being easier for people to get on the housing ladder, there has been a widening of the affordability gap.
- 3.6.16 Mortgage lenders have increased the range of products and offers as competition has increased. These include more flexible mortgage terms and other benefits e.g. the Halifax offering to pay stamp duty up to an agreed debt amount.

- 3.6.17 As an alternative to full home ownership, the experience of Registered Provider developers in Bristol is that part rent, part buy shared ownership schemes remain attractive to eligible buyers and remain a more affordable home ownership option.
- 3.6.18 In recent years there have also been other initiatives to assist individuals to buy homes and for home developers including local authorities, to move housing stock. A scheme was run between Lloyds Banking Group and Bristol City Council in 2012 to stimulate first time buyer demand in the City and fully subscribed.
- 3.6.19 Looking to the future, our conclusion is that the market outlook for home buyers is likely to become more challenging. Not only has the affordability gap widened in Bristol but the costs of renting privately have increased significantly which reduces the ability of potential buyers to save for a deposit.
- 3.6.20 In addition, mortgages will be harder to come by - new Mortgage Conduct of Business Regulation and Bank of England measures put increasing requirements on mortgage lenders which may make it more difficult for borrowers to access mortgages. Interest rate increases which are expected within the next 12 months will increase the costs of servicing mortgages for and put pressure on the disposable incomes of some mortgage payers.

Consideration of alternative sources of funding

- 3.6.21 It is clear that the Council is alive to new funding possibilities and has explored alternative options. This is positive and to be encouraged. Four alternative sources of finance were considered by the Commission:-

- Pension scheme investment
- Sale and leaseback
- The Bristol Bond
- Resale Covenant Schemes

Pension scheme investment

- 3.6.22 As one alternative, a suitable pension scheme (e.g. potentially in the case of Bristol, the Avon Pension Scheme) would directly invest funds in an appropriate property vehicle to deliver new affordable homes.
- 3.6.23 The Council has considered this and shared its findings with the Commission. The Commission concurs with the Council's view that at the present time direct investment by a pension scheme such as the Avon Pension Scheme in a new affordable housing investment portfolio is an unrealistic option.
- 3.6.24 The key issue is that the financial returns from affordable housing in Bristol are insufficient given the alternative investment options available and the legal obligation of the Trustees of the pension scheme to maximise investment returns for the benefit of their members and for the scheme.

- 3.6.25 Investment performance is the paramount issue for pension schemes particularly as many defined benefit pension schemes are having to increase contributions from members and employers to fund pension deficits (scheme assets are less than scheme liabilities).

Sale and leaseback finance

- 3.6.26 One productive line of inquiry by the Commission was consideration of institutional investment in new affordable housing supply by what we will categorise as 'sale and leaseback' type arrangements.
- 3.6.27 Sale and leaseback arrangements provide a credible and well established long term funding source in the market that offers advantages for some borrowers and for some transactions albeit that these financing sources can involve more complicated arrangements than most sources of conventional loan finance.
- 3.6.28 Typically, the providers of sale and leaseback finance are institutional pension funds who are seeking a long term and increasing (usually index linked) revenue stream from an RP owner and manager of affordable housing in return for an upfront capital sum.
- 3.6.29 Developers of affordable housing are interested in sale and leaseback as their preferred source of finance for a range of reasons for example where there are constraints on their ability to meet the covenant requirements of lenders using traditional finance facilities.
- 3.6.30 Sale and leaseback arrangements have a clear place in providing finance for affordable housing delivery but will not be suitable for everyone. What is also clear is that there is no shortage of funds available from the institutional investors to fund new homes supply using this finance method.

The Bristol Bond

- 3.6.31 The Commission considered an innovative funding opportunity known as 'The Bristol Bond', a scheme that is being developed by the John Pontin trust.
- 3.6.32 The scheme would enable socially minded private individuals and corporate bodies to invest in a Bristol Bond – 'Backing Our Bristol'. In return for their investment in BOB they would receive a financial return and also a social return in that the Bond investment would be used to support delivery of socially worthwhile projects in Bristol.
- 3.6.33 The Commission supports and encourages the further development of the Bristol Bond initiative, so that the practical application of 'BOB' to supporting delivery of more homes can be fully assessed.

Resale Covenant Schemes

- 3.6.34 Resale Covenant Schemes have been used by several developers of housing in the past 30 years or so, including by Local Authorities. The Commission believes that they can provide a useful source of capital finance as well as enabling the delivery of shared equity housing e.g. by the Council.
- 3.6.35 Under a resale covenant scheme, the Council puts land into a scheme for new shared equity homes for no upfront consideration. The land value would be agreed as a percentage of the full open market value of the new homes e.g. 30%.
- 3.6.36 The purchaser would pay the remaining balance of the market price e.g. 70% to the developer and would acquire – in this example - a 70% equity interest in the property but would have full ownership rights and responsibilities.
- 3.6.37 This arrangement enables a purchaser to get on the housing ladder more affordably compared with buying a 100% equity interest.
- 3.6.38 When the purchaser sells their home, they receive 70% of the sales price and the council receives 30%. This capital receipt of 30% can then be recycled by the Council into supporting the delivery of new affordable homes.
- 3.6.39 In this way the Council is acting as a ‘patient investor’ and in a rising housing market generating an additional stream of capital funding – a return on its land investment – that is related to rises in open market property values.

Delivering Affordable Homes and the issue of subsidy

- 3.6.40 A fundamental issue is that it is not possible to provide homes at a sub-market rent level that people on low and middle incomes can afford without there being some form of financial subsidy.
- 3.6.41 Subsidy is the mechanism by which the market cost of providing new housing is offset by either capital or revenue contributions from a variety of sources.
- 3.6.42 These include:
- Capital grant available from Government to Registered Providers (RPs) - primarily through the National Affordable Housing Programme and administered by the HCA
 - A ‘tax’ on developable land as applied through Section 106 planning agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy
 - Value from discounted or ‘free’ land – typically provided by LAs or other public bodies to enable delivery of the scheme
 - Grants to RPs from Local Authorities
 - The use of capital reserves by RPs – in effect their accumulated profits
 - Use by LAs of the New Homes Bonus (we note the future of NHB beyond 2015 is unclear)
 - Revenue subsidy – this is primarily provided directly to tenants to help them pay their rents through the housing benefit system. Under the current

programme of Welfare Reform this is being replaced and integrated into the new system of Universal Credit. This subsidy is means tested and subject to a series of caps and limits.

3.6.43 If we are to increase significantly the number of new affordable homes in Bristol (and nationally) we need to generate more and other forms of external subsidy – the assumption being that that government sources of capital and revenue subsidy are subject to significant financial pressures and so are unlikely to see any significant increase.

3.6.44 This is a challenge given parallel constraints on local government budgets and on RP's to achieve ever greater levels of efficiency.

3.6.45 Capital subsidy to RP's has been reduced significantly in recent years as government seeks to reduce the budget deficit. For example, in the 2008-11 period the capital grant available to the HCA to enable building new homes at social rent levels (which in Bristol are around 60% of market rents) was c£8.4 billion. In the 2011-15 period the grant was c£4.5 billion and for the 2015-18 period it will be c£1.7 billion.

3.6.46 Critically too, the homes build with HCA grant under both the 2011-15 and 2015-18 period will be at affordable rents – c80% of market rents. For tenants in these homes on housing benefit this means a higher revenue housing benefit cost than under the social rent system. The effect of Government policy is therefore to 'let rents – and housing benefit - take the strain' as capital spending is reduced.

3.6.47 The search for more subsidy will need to include a fuller examination of options including:

- How public and private land can be used to generate 'subsidy' - the granting of planning permission for new homes results in an immediate uplift in the land value and is a major source of value. Exploring how local authorities such as Bristol can create and capture a subsidy pool on public land is a productive area for investigation although not one that the Commission has explored at depth
- The use of tax incentives to encourage greater investment in new house building ventures including providing more market rented and affordable rented housing. The Commission notes that in the late 1980's and early 1990's the Business Expansion Scheme enabled many housing associations to build new affordable homes which were largely financed by private investors who received part of their returns through generous up front tax incentives
- Elsewhere in this report we refer to the need for the Council to leave no stone unturned in examining how the value in the Council's housing assets can be best used

- Giving RPs greater freedom over how they actively asset manage their housing portfolio's will improve the RP sector's use of their latent capacity

Which is more effective - capital or revenue subsidy?

3.6.48 The best approach to investing public funds into affordable housing as subsidy has long been debated. Assessing the relative value for money in the short, medium and longer term of capital versus revenue subsidy is complex

3.6.49 In part this is because the outcome is highly sensitive to the discount rate and time period involved. In part too, it is because the 'right answer' is heavily influenced by the realities imposed by the need for government to reduce the budget deficit which it can only do by closing the gap between government income and government spending.

3.6.50 It is also questionable whether a net present value or cost benefit analysis approach is wholly relevant. Any practical assessment – and development of any workable model - needs to go beyond a narrow financial and economic analysis and take account of wider factors including the social and political impacts.

An increasing Housing Benefit bill is unsustainable

3.6.51 The recent rise in the housing benefit bill is a result of the recession and higher unemployment. The long-term trend appears more structural than cyclical. With the housing benefit caseload now broadly constant, the majority of the increase in housing benefit spending can be attributed to claimants increasingly being housed in the more expensive private rented sector.

3.6.52 As of May 2013, total annual housing benefit spending was £20.9bn – with £12.5bn paid to affordable housing and £8.4bn to private rented housing. However, between May 2009 and May 2013, the total increase in housing benefit expenditure was £4.6bn, with payments to those in the private rented sector responsible for 52% of this increase.

3.6.53 In Bristol some £192 million is currently being spent annually on housing benefit (2013/14). Although some of the detail has yet to be clarified, it is assumed that a similar sum will continue to be provided as a revenue subsidy to individuals and families to help them with their housing costs within the new framework of Universal Credit.

3.6.54 The key issue is that whilst additional housing benefit spending helps people sustain their tenancy either in social rented, affordable rented or private rented accommodation, it does not – unlike capital subsidy - directly contribute to producing additional new affordable homes.

Rebalancing the capital and revenue subsidy to support greater investment in new homes

- 3.6.55 The consequence of the rise in housing benefit spend and a fall in capital subsidy spend on new homes is that of every £1 of direct government expenditure on housing, 95p is spent on housing benefit and only 5p on supporting building new homes. Whilst this doesn't include indirect measures such as Help to Buy, it is nevertheless unsustainable in the long-term given the scale of the housing crisis and the chronic undersupply of affordable homes.
- 3.6.56 A known amount of capital investment, instead of an unknown and difficult to control stream of future benefit payments, gives greater planning certainty for the public finances. It is also a more effective policy lever for government to shape the scale and nature of affordable housing delivery and target investment in areas and markets of most need, according to its priorities.
- 3.6.57 Reversing the bias away from revenue subsidy is also crucial to allow housing associations to charge lower rents, improving affordability for people in work on low incomes and, arguably, boosting labour market incentives.
- 3.6.58 Advocates of a revenue-based system argue that it is a more efficient way of targeting subsidy, as households' circumstances can change and their benefit entitlement can be better adjusted accordingly. In contrast, capital subsidy is locked up in (relative) perpetuity and can end up benefiting a household who no longer needs support.
- 3.6.59 This in turn raises the question of flexible rent policies that might require higher income households to pay higher rents with the additional income being used to subsidise new affordable homes.
- 3.6.60 On balance the view of the Commission is that the long term interests of the country would be better serviced if the balance between housing benefit revenue subsidy and housing capital subsidy investment in new homes was recalibrated in favour of capital subsidy.
- 3.6.61 But the Commission recognises that best balance between capital and revenue subsidy is a difficult issue. A one size fits all approach may not be best as different regional housing markets may have different needs for numbers of new affordable and other new homes.
- 3.6.62 Solutions to managing the supply of new affordable homes and the housing benefit bill need to reflect local circumstances and priorities. For this reason the Commission's view is that greater local control and flexibility over how the total capital and revenue subsidy pot is used would be appropriate - and consistent with government's agenda of localism.
- 3.6.63 The Commission is recommending, therefore, devolution of greater control over housing related budgets.

Recommendation 20 – Devolution of powers to make better use of housing welfare budgets

The Commission recommends that the Mayor lobby Central Government for new local freedoms to control and use the housing elements of Universal Credit in the context of the City Council's revenue and capital spending programmes to enable new investment in the provision of affordable rented homes.

Simplifying investment streams

- 3.6.64 The discussion above highlights that there is the potential to make more strategic and rational use of revenue and capital grant to ensure it is targeted at delivering the most appropriate local outcomes.
- 3.6.65 Whilst the level of direct capital investment has fallen and is likely to remain constrained for some time, it has been accompanied by a significant increase in the range of smaller funding streams – national programmes but also some local programmes too. We understand that the HCA administers some 40+ funding streams targeted at different housing related supply initiatives.
- 3.6.66 New funding is always welcome, but too diverse a range of funding streams all with different terms and conditions makes it difficult to coordinate and leverage the full weight of government investment together with the significant investment made from housing providers' own resources and especially their access to private finance.
- 3.6.67 This also brings increased administration and compliance cost and is at odds with achieving greater value for money.
- 3.6.68 The Commission's preference would be for simplification. For example, a simpler and more strategic approach to using investment in housing and infrastructure and one which could be implemented relatively quickly, would be to combine funding sources into a single 'challenge fund'.
- 3.6.69 Bringing funding together in this way could strip out bureaucracy, rules, regulations and micro-management which characterise the current approach and add cost to government and to those delivering new homes. A challenge fund would allow investment to be used to deliver different solutions in different markets.
- 3.6.70 A longer-term option may be to explore the merits of creating a government-backed, national housing and infrastructure investment bank to provide a mix of capital, equity finance and soft loan funding. Government could underpin the risk and guarantee investor return, to attract higher levels of private investment.

Possible indirect financial investment

- 3.6.71 One alternative to direct investment are tax incentives/credits, which work effectively to stimulate new housing supply – as seen in a number of countries

including the USA and Australia. The principles that work there could be implemented alongside measures already in place in England.

3.6.72 For example, tax incentives/credits could be offered to developers of affordable housing, who in turn could sell them on to high net worth individuals, who could use them to reduce their own tax liabilities.

3.6.73 This could help attract a greater flow of institutional investment and a market for tax credits. The tax credits might last for a period of, say, 10 years and it is likely the housing would remain 'affordable' for a specific period e.g. 15-30 years, too. The model could be designed at LEP or city region level.

The imperative of land

3.6.74 Critically, grant is not the only form of capital subsidy which can make a difference to the supply of new homes. It almost goes without saying that land is the fundamental resource for any activity with housing development and this is why action to increase land supply features so prominently in this report.

3.6.75 The high cost, price volatility and limited availability of land all directly impact on risk and financial viability. These are compounded by the complexities of the land market created by for example, fragmented ownership, land banking and option agreements. All of these can affect the supply and cost of developable land.

3.6.76 The planning system, in part, and section 106 planning gain in particular, provide an important subsidy for affordable housing. This subsidy is primarily delivered in-kind through discounted or 'free' land and/or homes. Recent reform of the planning system and increased negotiation over section 106 agreements following the Growth and Infrastructure Act 2013, has, however, created uncertainty over the extent to which this approach can support the delivery of new affordable homes in the future.

3.6.77 Public land which is either discounted, free or paid for at a later date, should play a more important role in housing delivery, especially where capital grant is limited.

3.6.78 Importantly, as well, public bodies with land available to release should not simply focus on maximising the capital receipt when quantifying their goals. Whilst there are currently limits on the level of discount public bodies can make when disposing of land due to constraints imposed by departmental budgets, this often reflects 'hope value' rather than a realistic market value.

3.6.79 This situation could be avoided if government guidance on 'best consideration' was revised. Public bodies would be encouraged to take a much broader view of the return they can expect when releasing land for housing.

- 3.6.80 In particular, they would be able to realise the social and economic benefits of housing. This should also include more innovative approaches to bringing land forward on more favourable terms. Examples include discounted or deferred payments and lease-back or equity sharing arrangements.
- 3.6.81 Using government support more strategically should also involve integrating housing and land programmes more effectively. This would ensure that support for housing, land and infrastructure is more efficient and delivers greater impact.
- 3.6.82 One way to do this would be to join-up government-supported house building programmes with public land disposal responsibilities. Government should also show greater leadership in brokering relationships with stalled sites' owners.
- 3.6.83 This would allow housing providers to access more land, keep land costs down and get construction going on derelict public and private sites. This could be extended to include the provision of upfront infrastructure investment to unlock sites.

SECTION 4 – Table of Recommendations

LAND AND SITES SUPPLY	WHO
<p>Recommendation 1 – Proactively looking for opportunities to create additional housing land and site assembly options</p> <p>The Commission recommends that the City Council carries out a review all of the land and estate within its control so as to identify additional housing land and site supply options over the short, medium and longer term.</p> <p>This process should give active consideration to ways in which services and use of existing sites can be reconfigured to release additional housing land. Expertise located in the Bristol Property Board should be called on as required to support this review process.</p> <p>Possible initiatives would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv) Combining council land with that of other public bodies to create more attractive portfolios v) Considering co-location with other public agencies and subsequent site disposal where the location of the provision of services is flexible vi) Considering the complete relocation of services from high value sites which may have significant re-development potential for new homes and jobs services, to other locations vii) Commitment to a cyclical review of estate assets (e.g. every three years) in the light of changing service delivery priorities 	<p>Bristol City Council</p>
<p>Recommendation 2 - Enhancing the role of the Bristol Property Board</p> <p>The Commission strongly supports the Bristol Property Board (BPB) having a more direct role and the authority to broker deals across all public bodies that release land for affordable housing use, in partnership with other agencies, especially the Homes & Communities Agency.</p> <p>Specifically;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) The Commission recommends that the BPB is given, or more robustly adopts, this land deal brokering role. The BPB should then be able to make recommendations on options to enable an increase in the supply of housing land and sites ii) The Commission recommends that consideration is given by the BPB to having a dedicated senior resource who can support the identification of opportunities and can ‘make things happen’. 	<p>Bristol Property Board</p>
<p>Recommendation 3 – Creating a Revolving Investment Fund to support ‘Stranded Assets’</p> <p>To unlock the housing development potential of sites that are ‘stranded’ for example because they are technically challenging and / or require connecting infrastructure works before they will be viable housing development sites, the</p>	<p>Bristol City Council</p>

<p>Commission recommends that the Council consider setting up a Revolving Investment Fund.</p> <p>This would be used to fund site investment works that would unlock its development value. The council's investment and an appropriate risk based return would be recouped on subsequent sale of the site. This would create a 'win win' situation for both the Council and the public (or other) body which owns the stranded site.</p> <p>Sites funded in this way and released to the market for the development of new homes would form part of an Annual Disposals Plan (see Recommendation 5) overseen by the Bristol Property Board so as to provide maximum clarity and transparency to the market.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 4 – Creating value from regenerating brownfield/greyfield areas of land and sites</p> <p>The Commission recommends that the Council considers the potential benefits to new homes supply that would flow from carrying out carefully targeted regeneration activity in areas where there is underutilised public amenity land.</p>	<p>Bristol City Council</p>
<p>Recommendation 5 – Preparing an annual Prospectus for Housing</p> <p>The Commission recommends that the Council and/or Bristol Property Board should prepare an annual disposals plan (a Prospectus for Housing) that brings together all the site disposal plans of public landowners in Bristol.</p>	<p>Bristol City Council/Bristol Property Board</p>
<p>Recommendation 6 – Establish a specialist stalled site unlocking team in the Council</p> <p>The Commission recommends that within the Council a specialist 'unlocking team' is set up, supported by the HCA to target and systematically unlock these difficult housing sites with targeted and tailored interventions. This would include, in particular, those empty offices which have obtained deemed consent under permitted development rights for conversion to housing, but which are now 'stuck' because the sole purpose was to increase the asset value.</p>	<p>Bristol City Council/Homes and Communities Agency</p>
<p>PLANNING FOR HOUSING DELIVERY</p>	
<p>Recommendation 7 – Developing and nurturing an alternative homes sector</p> <p>The Commission recommends that the Council and the Homes & Communities Agency develop a strategy to encourage and support innovation in developing sustainable, scalable and repeatable alternative models of new homes supply in Bristol that includes Custom Build, Institutional Market Rent, Self Build and Modular Housing.</p> <p>This strategy should include some larger housing sites being allocated by condition to include Custom Build and Institutional Market Rent with an element reserved for three years' worth of build for market sale.</p> <p>The Commission recommends that within 6 months, where a neighbourhood plan has been prepared and approved communities should be actively encouraged to use the Community Right to Build or other mechanisms such as CLT to bring the development to fruition.</p> <p>In the short term it is also suggested that the Council or the HCA host a workshop to consider in more depth the opportunities,</p>	<p>Bristol City Council/Homes and Communities Agency</p>

issues, activity and current capacity in Bristol that could enable some further pilot schemes.	
<p>Recommendation 8 – Prioritise delivery of more homes in the short term and more affordable homes over the longer term</p> <p>The Commission recommends that the Council reviews it's planning policy and actively considers how it can best use its planning powers in relation to housing mix and affordable housing to maximise new homes delivery in the short term and maximise affordable homes delivery over time.</p> <p>One suggestion would be that on new planning permissions, for the next three years or such earlier date as the Council decides based on achievement of housing targets, affordable housing will only be required either where there is sufficient grant, land or other subsidy to achieve viability or on specific sites identified through area action plans or neighbourhood plans.</p>	Bristol City Council
<p>Recommendation 9 – Ensure new homes planning targets over the longer term are both supported by robust evidence and are planned for on a sub-regional basis</p> <p>Once the SHMA is completed the Commission recommends that that the Council brings forward and carries out a review of its Core Strategy and that all four actively works with the other West of England authorities collaborate to review all Core Strategies working to a common set of policy goals.</p>	Bristol City Council/West of England local authorities
<p>Recommendation 10 – Compulsory Purchase Orders</p> <p>The Commission considers that there is a case for greater use of CPOs where sites have remained undeveloped for several years or where site assembly across different ownerships is required. At the same time the Commission recognises the lengthy, bureaucratic and costly nature of current prescribed processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) The government is recommended to urgently review and simplify either primary or secondary legislation associated with CPOs. One option is to consider the US 'Quick Take' linked to non-payment of land taxes. ii) The Commission recommends that the Council examine how it can be more active in its approach to the use of CPO's to ensure that potential housing sites that are being unreasonably stalled are unlocked. iii) The HCA is recommended to actively use its own, somewhat simpler CPO powers, in collaboration with the City Council 	<p>Central Government</p> <p>Bristol City Council</p> <p>Homes and Communities Agency</p>
LEADERSHIP AND SYSTEMS	
<p>Recommendation 11 - Creating a 'Results-not-Process' Culture</p> <p>With regard to delivery of new homes BCC should place greater emphasis on driving through a 'results-not-process' culture change and which is supportive of a more entrepreneurial can-do and less risk averse approach to the delivery of more homes, faster homes. The change process to achieve this outcome should be led by the council's Senior Leadership Team (SLT)</p> <p>This will have the greatest impact when combined with measures (see R12) that lead to a visible reduction and elimination of process & policy barriers that add cost, time and risk to developer & registered provider housing proposals, without any significant related housing supply benefits.</p>	Bristol City Council & Homes4Bristol
Recommendation 12 - Introduce end-to-end programme management	Bristol City Council

<p>To realise efficiency and supply benefits the Commission recommends that the Council carry out a 'conception to delivery' review of existing housing delivery systems and implement lean systems of project and programme management.</p> <p>The Commission also recommends that the authority, responsibility and accountability for delivering new housing and place making outcomes is vested in officers whose performance measures are clearly defined around delivering housing outcomes and not about management of process and minimising risk.</p> <p>The emphasis should be on simplifying procedures, reducing waste, time, cost and focusing on eliminating activities that do not directly contribute to the outcome of delivering 'more housing, faster housing'.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 13: Post implementation review of new organisational arrangements</p> <p>The Commission recommends that the impact and effectiveness of the Council's new directorate structure arrangements in enabling the objective of more homes, faster homes are reviewed after a year in use, or sooner if there are indications that there are no positive, or adverse, impacts on the delivery of new homes.</p>	<p>Bristol City Council</p>
<p>Recommendation 14 – Ensure robust accountability and scrutiny for implementation of the Affordable Housing Delivery Framework</p> <p>The Commission recommends that a senior Council officer is made accountable for delivery of the Affordable Housing Delivery Framework and that to assist them in carrying out this responsibility they have a direct reporting line to the Assistant Mayor with responsibility for housing.</p> <p>The Commission also recommends that progress in implementation of the AHDF is subject to external scrutiny by an appropriate body and that this is reflected in their Terms of Reference.</p>	<p>Bristol City Council</p>
<p>MAKING BEST USE OF STRATEGIC ASSETS</p>	
<p>Recommendation 15 - Government should raise or eliminate the HRA borrowing cap imposed upon the Council and it should enable land and other asset transfers from general account to HRA account on the same basis as is available to Registered Providers</p> <p>The Commission notes with concern the detrimental impact on the supply of new affordable homes in Bristol resulting from nationally imposed restrictions on debt and borrowing caps and on the requirement for transfer of land and assets from general account to the HRA to be at market value.</p> <p>The Commission notes clear benefits to the supply of new council homes from raising the HRA borrowing cap and thereby unlocking additional borrowing capacity and also from enabling the transfer of land from general account to the HRA at a discounted value.</p> <p>The Commission is of the view that where new HRA debt is fully serviced through rental income and is an investment in an</p>	<p>Central Government</p>

<p>appreciating infrastructure asset such as new homes, then this should not be treated as a public borrowing liability. Similarly where the value of a discounted land transfer unlocks Council investment in new homes then this subsidy should also be treated as an investment in new homes</p> <p>For these reasons the Commission strongly supports actions that may lead to a change in government policy on this issue including lobbying by Council leaders and bodies such as the Local Government Association and the National Housing Federation.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 16: Council Wide Review of Land and Property Assets for Potential Housing Development</p> <p>The Commission recommends that a project / process is put in place to reach a clear understanding on how much developable land is held in the General Account that could potentially be used to support additional new housing supply either by BCC Landlord Services or by external partners.</p> <p>Once this has been determined then a plan should be developed and implemented to support the value for money release of this land for new housing use.</p>	<p>Bristol City Council</p>
<p>Recommendation 17 - Complete the Housing Revenue Account Asset Review to examine the impact of releasing some stock to create more new homes</p> <p>iv) We recommend that the Council's Landlord Services continue to resource and invest in development of the Strategic Asset Management model so as to gain a comprehensive understanding of the current and future performance of all of the retained housing stock and to support an ongoing programme of active asset management.</p> <p>v) This active asset management would include giving consideration to the disposal of negative value housing stock so that the net disposal proceeds can be used to develop new council homes. We recognise that the size and shape of any disposal portfolio will need to be determined through an iterative process that considers a range of factors including the social amenity, the HRA impact and the open market value of the stock alongside the potential benefits from reinvesting all or part of the sales proceeds in the development of new affordable housing</p> <p>vi) We also recommend that the Council's Landlord Services considers (as part of its Strategic Asset Management work) carrying out a transparent and robust assessment of the impact of continuing with its current policy of stock retention (including the impact on the retained Landlord Service and the HRA Account) on the ability of the Council to enable the development of new affordable homes over and above current planned levels.</p> <p>A key aim is to understand and identify whether there is a portfolio of stock that, through the mechanism of a stock transfer, has the potential to unlock access to significant additional private finance borrowing capacity. This additional borrowing would support additional investment in any non-retained stock and the capability of any stock transfer organisation to develop new affordable homes.</p>	<p>Bristol City Council</p>
<p>Recommendation 18 - Fully examine the Municipal Housing Company model</p> <p>The Localism Act provides Councils with a new 'general power of competence' and this gives local authorities greater freedom to</p>	<p>Bristol City Council/National</p>

<p>innovate - including the ability to set up local housing companies. There are a number of examples of local authorities at varying stages of pursuing the local housing company option.</p> <p>These companies, whilst independent, can be wholly owned by councils. The indications are that they are able to borrow outside of the restrictions of local authority borrowing caps. Councils' across the country are setting up such companies which allow the development of mixed tenures and to not have to permit the Right to Buy.</p> <p>The Commission believes that the opportunity to establish a Municipal Housing Company (MHC) in Bristol may offer a promising area for exploration to increase the supply of affordable homes and should be given serious consideration.</p>	<p>Housing Federation</p>
<p>Recommendation 19 – Review action to bring more empty private homes into use</p> <p>The Commission recognises that the Council has been very effective at bringing empty private homes back into use. However in response to concern about this issue by the Citizens Panel it recommends that work is undertaken on whether there would be positive effect on reducing empties of increasing the Council Tax still further.</p>	<p>Bristol City Council</p>
<p>FUNDING HOUSING DELIVERY, SUBSIDY AND AFFORDABILITY</p>	
<p>Recommendation 20 – Use of Universal Credit</p> <p>The Commission recommends that the Mayor should lobby Central Government for new local freedoms to control and use the housing elements of Universal Credit in the context of the City Council's revenue and capital spending programmes to enable new investment in the provision of affordable rented homes.</p>	<p>Mayor, Central Government</p>

Appendix 1 – Stakeholder Engagement

A1.1 Citizen's Panel

- A1.1.1 The Homes Commission consulted with Bristol Citizen's Panel over affordable housing issues in April 2014. The Citizen's Panel is a statistically representative sample of the population of Bristol and has been invaluable to the council and its partners in researching how Bristol people feel on issues and providing the opportunity for feedback on future policies and decisions.
- A1.1.2 The panel currently has around 2,000 members and since its creation in 1998 many thousands of people have served on the panel or been given the opportunity to join. The panel's membership is constantly 'refreshed' to continue to provide opportunities for people to get involved in local decision making.
- A1.1.3 The Commission presented the panel with some statements about affordable housing that they were asked to agree or disagree with. The statements used were:
- When house builders are applying for planning permission it is more important to ask them to provide affordable homes than to provide other community benefits, e.g. open space, public art, contribution to new schools etc.
 - When granting planning permission it is more important to maximise the affordable homes, even if that results in a lengthy delay.
 - The Council should consider moving control of some of its council housing to another organisation, such as a wholly-owned council company or not for profit landlord, if that results on it being able to raise more money to build more new homes.
 - The Council should prioritise new affordable homes through the sale of its own land, even if that means less money is raised for other projects.
 - The Council should use the Government's standards for energy conservation and design in order to reduce costs so that more affordable homes can be built.
 - The Council should agree to higher rents being charged to new tenants so that more money is raised to build more new affordable homes.
- A1.1.4 Some 938 people responded to the survey, a 45% response. Four of the proposals received more agreement than disagreement, with half of the panel or more slightly agreeing or strongly agreeing. These were:
- 64% agreed that the Council should consider moving control of some of its council housing to another organisation if this enables them to borrow more money to build new homes (20% disagree)

- 55% of respondents agreed that it is more important to maximise the number of affordable homes, even if this causes a long delay to when the homes are provided (29% disagree)
- 50% agreed that it is more important for house builders to provide affordable homes, than other community benefits (38% disagree)
- 50% agreed that the Council should use the Government's standards for energy conservation and design, rather than impose higher standards, to reduce costs so that more affordable houses can be built (37% disagree).

A1.1.5 There was more disagreement on other issues

- 53% disagreed with the statement that the Council should charge higher rents to new tenants so that more money is raised to build more new affordable homes (compared to 30% who agreed with the statement).
- 45% disagreed that the Council should prioritise new affordable homes through the sale of its own land, even if that means less money is raised for other projects (compared to 37% who agreed with the statement).

A1.1.6 The survey also included a section for additional comments. The comments were extensive, and a complete listing of the results and comments received can be viewed on the Bristol City Council, [Citizens Panel reports](#) web page. The main thrust of the comments can be summarised as follows:

- There should be more use made of compulsory purchase of any spare land and derelict buildings which have been left unattended.
- Conversion of buildings (such as empty offices, empty shops) into affordable homes was a common theme, as was the recommendation that the Council to buy back repossessions/ex council properties and stop 'right to buy' sales. Punitively taxing the owners of empty properties/derelict sites was also often noted.
- There were mixed views on property size – some respondents' emphasised the need for more family sized homes and less flats, others wanted to see more flats being built. A general need for more spacious properties was noted, as was need to design 'communities' not just homes – i.e. homes had to be good quality and be located with supporting infrastructure/transport links etc.
- Using brownfield sites over green was a common theme.
- Greater use of self-build cited in a number of cases and a number of responses highlight the benefits of pre-fabricated components to reduce build time and cut costs by using standardised parts. A number of references were made to learning from Scandinavian countries.

- Be more active in assessing suitability of land holdings and more proactive in seeking new housing sites.
- Encourage house share schemes and/or encourage greater adoption of shared ownership and co-buying schemes– review existing equity release schemes.
- The Mayor should lobby government to change funding rules – the local authority should be able to use its own resources to build new homes. A number of comments did highlight that some changes required central, rather than local, government input in order to implement change.
- Some degree of greater control over private landlords was noted in a number of cases – particularly in the form of some form of rent-capping. Others wished to see doubling or tripling of council tax for people with empty properties or owned more than one house. Conversely, some suggested reducing taxation on new builds or offering incentives to developers to boost supply.
- Some thought the Council should sell properties in most expensive parts of the city e.g. Clifton, Redland and use the money to develop greater numbers of new properties in more affordable areas – others, however, thought that having council properties spread across a range of communities and neighbourhoods within the city was more socially beneficial.
- Among the comments made about financing of new homes, there were references to sustainable building loans with preferential rates, relaxing the amounts available for councils to use from rents. There was at least one reference to using pension funds to provide funding for more housing.
- That allocations for social housing should favour local people was also a common theme.

A1.2 Stakeholder Event

A1.2.1 The Homes Commission also held a stakeholder event for individuals and organisations with an interest in housing delivery at Armada House in Bristol on May 16th 2014. The event was well attended by some 75 representatives from organisations such as:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Aasyhana Housing Association | • Knightstone Housing Group |
| • Affinity Sutton | • LLB Investment |
| • Ark Housing Consultancy LLP | • Lloyds |
| • Askew Architects | • MAPPS Consortium |
| • Bristol CLT | • Merlin Housing Society |
| • Brunel Care | • National Housing Federation |

- Callidus Transport and Engineering Ltd
- Cotswold Homes
- Crest Strategic Projects
- CSJ Planning Consultants Ltd
- DAC Beachcroft LLP
- Elim Housing
- Grainger PLC
- GVA
- GVA and Trustee Alderman Steevens Trust
- HAB Housing
- Homes and Communities Agency
- Hugh Nettlefield Consultancy
- JBP
- Jephson Housing Association Group
- Network Rail
- Noma Architects
- Places For People
- Redrow Homes Limited
- Ridge and Partners LLP
- Savills
- Solon Housing
- Sovereign Housing Association
- Tetlow King Planning
- Turner & Townsend Project Management
- United Communities
- University of the West of England
- Valuation Office Agency
- WYG

A1.2.2 The stakeholder event involved several workshop sessions. The first session had discussion tables dedicated to each of the five main themes of the Commission's recommendations, namely:

- Land and site supply
- Planning for Housing delivery
- Leadership and systems
- Making better use of strategic assets, and
- Housing finance, subsidy and affordability

A1.2.3 There were also several tables that looked at a range of topics from across the five main themes. There was, overall, a great deal of support and endorsement from stakeholders for the main findings of the Commission and its recommendations. Among the issues raised during the first workshop session were:

- There was some debate about how broad the definition of 'strategic assets' was going to be – does it include, schools, infrastructure etc, for example? The importance of the Council looking again at its stock retention policy along with a wider assessment of *all* of the assets that

it currently holds and how they can contribute to 'more homes faster homes' was also emphasised.

- The Horfield redevelopment by United Communities was mentioned a few times, with a view that it could possibly be replicated elsewhere. A number of comments emphasised the importance of a greater role for the Bristol Property Board –facilitating the release of stalled sites and having a strategic overview of the whole public sector estate across individual organisations.
- It was felt that there was a need to re-negotiate Affordable Housing – quite a lot of support for early adoption of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). There was some discussion about tenure mix, and how best to integrate affordable housing within schemes. The flexibility of section 106 agreements was noted, with a view that 'commuted sums' were often taken in lieu of affordable housing being provided.
- Some questioned whether CPO was an issue – given the amount of land owned by Bristol. There were however sentiments expressed that housing asset owners should be put under pressure to maximise the performance of their assets, or hand them over to someone who will.
- There was a view that the Council needs to be less prescriptive in relation to the terms it attaches to disposals. Planning was seen as too bureaucratic with too many planning 'asks' adding costs and delay. It was also felt that there was sometimes no co-ordination of different planning obligations (e.g. public art; archaeology, bats).
- Strategic sites do not exist within the city boundary – thinking needs to go beyond the city boundary. Taking a broader, sub-regional perspective to housing supply issues was raised a number of times throughout the day. Participants wanted to see a single West of England housing strategy for delivery.
- For leadership and systems, participants were broadly in agreement with the Commission. Need to look at whole process in order to make it more effective. Need a dynamic lead to make it happen – is it about planning or enabling? Need ambition and scale and a willingness to take risks.
- Produce an annual disposal plan for all public sector land in any one year – what when and how? This would allow developers to have a forward discussion. The local authority could help some sites to be de-risked.
- There needed to be a flexible approach to subsidy. Revolving funding was mentioned, as well as the desire to have more freedom in local use of the housing element of universal credit.

A1.2.4 The stakeholder event also recognised that the delivery of 'more homes, faster homes' was the responsibility of a range of organisations, not just the city council.

A1.2.5 The Chair of the Commission asked those in attendance for their own 'pledges' – what could they or their organisations do to contribute to help deliver more housing? Homes 4 Bristol, which is Bristol's Strategic Housing Partnership, will subsequently follow up these pledges and seek to work more closely with the organisations and individuals who have offered their services and time.

A1.2.6 A list of the pledges made is noted below:

Funding Housing Delivery, Subsidy and Affordability

- Commit available capacity and resources within the development team of Merlin to achieve affordable housing delivery targets – Michelle Thomas.
- Be available to review funding proposals along with other colleagues particularly around joined up delivery vehicles – Tony Oakley, Lloyds
- Contact all RPs in Bristol area to ensure all aware of availability of funding for RPs of all sizes to maximise use of capacity – Tony Oakley, Lloyds
- Share experience in supported/more housing in Bristol City Council. Share knowledge of work outside Bristol and South West – Jephson.

Planning for Housing Delivery

- I shall make contact with Vanguard Consulting and find out which council has been the most successful in doing a wholesale systems review of the planning process – Helen Joy
- I pledge to give serious consideration to all site disposals brought forward by Bristol City Council – Ralph Hawkins TW
- Difficult to pledge when our offer is our professional time. However, we have already reviewed the sites mentioned at the framework launch from a high level point of view. We would be pleased to look at each in a little more detail, and to spread the word on the opportunity to our clients – Robert S. – Callidus Transport and Engineering.

Leadership and Systems

- Happy to offer opportunity for job shadowing/short secondments (reciprocal) to BCC officers involved in delivery (Merlin) – Michelle Thomas
- Commit to driving an end-to-end review of delivery processes – Nick Hooper, BCC
- Willing to be involved with other housing providers to take part in constructive feedback/learning outcomes with housing and planning and property board – KHA & Merlin Michelle Thomas and Allison Hambridge, Alistair Allender, J. Godwin HZI, Neil Blackbeard – Jephson, Caroline Hughes – Knightstone, James Gibson – Sovereign,

Paul Ville – Solon, Phil Stephens – Sovereign, Oona Goldsworthy, Monira Chowdhury - Aashyana.

- I am happy to try and broker discussions with any RPs that might have assets/balance sheet capacity that is not being utilised fully effectively – Dave Ashmore, Consultant
- Assist Council Streamline – delivery programme, Management of delivery, HRA Housing/RP Housing – Stuart Larkin and Associates Ltd.
- Review Action Plan in the Affordable Housing Delivery Framework to take account of Homes Commission recommendations – Tim Southall, BCC.
- We will spend our money on new homes in Bristol, assuming support and pro-active enabling/planning. We will raise more borrowing – to commit to Bristol and spend it, pledge to work together with BCC and RPs to make best use of development opportunities. We want to work with you and have investment resources available, but you need to share risks with us and facilitate your resources. SOLON
- HCA – work with BCC to align funding streams to Council priorities. DCLG Local Growth Fund 'Housing Revenue Account' Borrowing Programme.
- Sign up to deliver targets identified by Performance Agreement via enabling – C. Hughes, Knightstone

Land and Supply

- Build out Morton Street and work with H&SC to deliver more on housing – Jephson.
- Establish an annual process of 'development land intentions' to give early market signals – Nick Hooper, Bristol City Council

Make Best Use of Strategic Assets

- Facilitate a workshop to share learning on municipal housing company – Cathy Osborn, Robert Grundy, Savills. Also property market analysis and trends, Savills
- Invite BCC landlord service management board to visit Elim Housing – Invite senior planner to Bristol Housing Partnership to talk about role.
- Will act as a named point of contact into network rail and company 'guide' – emma.walker@networkrail.co.uk 0117 3721 110
- Investigate alternative models for Council Housing- arms length/MHC etc
- Complete review of Housing Revenue Account (HRA) assets and look at redevelopment opportunities – especially working in partnership with RPs.

- United Communities/KHA – Co-ordinate RPs in Bristol on BCC and Section 106.
- James Howard – adapt properties, Hengrove – Free help.
- Zoe Willcox (BCC) will make Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) happen.
- Conference in 2015 on delivery and conflict with green sustainability - Robert Narracott
- KHA – 200/250 homes in Bristol in next 3/4 years
- Continue to develop affordable housing in Bristol - Affinity Sutton
- A rated EPC/20% renewables - Hugh Nettlefield
- Valuation Office Agency and the District Valuers Service – Can facilitate/undertake independent viability reviews and training, CPOs process/registration and training, Strategic property reviews.
- Undertake an audit of Council owned freehold sites to assess those that could be released for development – Craig O'Brien, Savills, Tel: 0117 910 0335

A1.2.7 The final report of the Homes Commission reflects the views expressed by the Citizen's panel and the stakeholder event. Pledges will be followed up so that the benefits are captured.

Appendix 2 – Homes Commission Process and Methodology

A2.1 The Homes Commission: Process and Methodology

- A2.1.1 The work of the Homes Commission, like all of Bristol's Mayoral Commissions, is based on the structure and processes of House of Commons Select Committees. In brief, this means that a relatively small number of people with relevant expertise are 'selected' (hence the term select committees) and brought together to examine a particular issue in some depth. A Chair is selected from the membership and 'terms of reference' are drafted for the committee.
- A2.1.2 Committees set priorities for themselves over a period of time, deciding on the major issues to cover and the scope of their inquiry. Terms of reference help achieve this by clarifying the remit of the committee and helping them remain focused on the main issues. The Committees then gather written and oral evidence on their particular topic from a variety of invited witnesses and report their findings back to the House of Commons, in the form of a final report with evidence based recommendations.
- A2.1.3 The Homes Commission terms of reference are included in this final report in Appendix 3, with the Commission's main aim being to identify solutions that will help to improve the supply of housing, especially affordable housing, in both the short, medium and longer term. The terms of reference guide the Commission's work but do not restrict the Commission in pursuing lines of inquiry that emerge and are germane to delivering the overarching objective of improving the supply of new homes.
- A2.1.4 It was agreed that the Commission's recommendations would add value to the following objectives:
- Increasing the supply of housing, particularly affordable housing, in the city
 - Making the best use of Bristol's land assets
 - Empowering the council to explore alternative routes of funding and creating a market within the city for alternative investment
 - Budget planning, where appropriate
 - Developing more effective working relationships with our key partners
- A2.1.5 The Commission's recommendations will feed into the future Bristol City Council Housing Strategy and the work of Homes4Bristol.
- A2.1.6 The Commission met eight times overall between November 2013 and June 2014 and took evidence from 21 expert witnesses (17 of which were external to the Commission's membership). It also consulted with Bristol's Citizen's Panel in April 2014 and held a stakeholder consultation event in May 2014 in order to test out some of its draft

recommendations with a range of organisations involved in housing delivery in Bristol.

- A2.1.7 The first session of the Commission (November 2013) formally established the membership and terms of reference of the Commission. The Commission received a presentation from Nick Hooper, Bristol City Council (BCC) Service Director for Strategic Housing which set out the local context and major City Council initiatives already underway. Rachel Fisher introduced a report 'Development Models and Funding Streams – A position paper from the National Housing Federation' that set out the national context for delivery of affordable housing and actions to increase funding and development. The Commission also considered the Affordable Housing Delivery Framework (AHDF) which was being launched by the City Council in December 2013, and received information on stalled sites (as of April 2013) and the state of the housing market in Bristol in 2013 along with a report on 'Innovative Financing of Affordable Housing International and UK Perspectives'.
- A2.1.8 The second meeting the Commission (November 2013) considered a draft Assessment Matrix that had been produced by the Chair to analyse the value of schemes to increase the supply of affordable housing (AH) and identify areas that needed further examination. At this session the Commission also considered the format of question and answer sessions with expert witnesses. Members agreed that the expert witness sessions would consist of an introduction from the Chair and the guest, followed by a roundtable Q&A. The Commission heard evidence from expert witnesses, Keith Annis, Planning Director of Redrow Homes and Mike Day, Director of Development and Home Ownership, Knightstone Housing Group and Managing Director Arc Homes. The Commission also heard evidence from Stuart Ropke, Assistant Director, Policy and Research, National Housing Federation, on financial issues related to housing delivery.
- A2.1.9 At the third session (December 2013) the Commission heard evidence from expert witnesses James Chaffner of Alder King and David Freer of ATLAS, Edward Rowberry of the John Pontin Trust, and Phil Stephens, Director of Development at Sovereign Housing Group. The Commission also considered the Key Lines of Inquiry (KLOI) and assessment matrix that had been prepared by Nick Horne and David Warburton, with support from Nick Hooper.
- A2.1.10 The Commission's fourth meeting took place in January 2014. At this meeting the Commission heard evidence from expert witnesses, Nigel Rule of Aviva, Simon Gait of Linden Homes and Robert Grundy and Cathy Osborn of Savills. Also at this session David Warburton provided a summary regarding Resale Covenant Schemes and Chris Brown provided the Commission with a presentation outlining custom build opportunities.
- A2.1.11 The fifth meeting of the Commission (February 2014) heard from expert witnesses Nicky Debbage and Chris Brake from Landlord

Services, Bristol City Council, Kevin Gibbs from Bond Dickinson and Neil Taylor, Interim Strategic Director of Regeneration at Bristol City Council. At this session David Warburton, Joint Chair of the Bristol Property Board (BPB), provided an introductory statement setting out the aims and objectives of the Property Board.

- A2.1.12 The Commission met for a sixth time in March 2014. At this session the Commission heard expert testimony from John Paterson, a Partner from Ark Housing Consultancy and Tony Oakley, the Senior Relationship Director for Social Housing at Lloyds Bank. There was a lengthy discussion on the draft final report.
- A2.1.13 The session was also attended in part by the Mayor, George Ferguson, so he could discuss with the Commission some of their emerging findings. This followed a previous meeting in February between the Chair and the Mayor at which the Commission's key lines of inquiry were discussed.
- A2.1.14 The seventh meeting of the Commission took place in April 2014 and was largely devoted to working through the draft final report, although the Commission also considered some initial findings from the Citizen's Panel survey on housing related issues that was currently underway, and looked forward to their proposed stakeholder event, which was due to take place on May 16th 2014.
- A2.1.15 The eighth and final meeting of the Commission was on June 10th 2014 and was devoted to examining the comments and feedback generated by the Citizen's Panel survey and the stakeholder event in May and how these comments could be best integrated and reflected in the final report. The Commission then considered what was then draft 4 of the final report. It was noted that the recommendations themselves would be finalised by June 23rd and the text of the final report by June 30th.

Appendix 3: Homes Commission Terms of Reference (including Membership)

Commission name	HOMES Commission
Timescales	<p>A task and finish Commission.</p> <p>Frequency of meetings:</p> <p>Nov - inaugural meeting Dec to Mar – ongoing progress April – final findings</p>
Purpose	<p>Provision of housing, particularly affordable housing, is one of the most challenging issues for Bristol and as such has been designated as a top priority for Mayor Ferguson.</p> <p>The Homes Commission will tackle this complex issue by bringing together experts, both local and national, to produce specific policy recommendations that will meet the city's housing needs.</p>
Focus	<p>The Homes Commission will conduct an assessment of work streams in place/planned to increase the supply of affordable housing, with a view to identifying those best suited to further investigation. The focus for the commission is on increasing the supply of affordable housing, defined as housing that is made available to rent or purchase at below-market rates. The assessment will be used to inform work around the following priorities;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore non-traditional and innovative models of housing funding (e.g. bonds, pension funds, community funding) to develop recommendations to enable the building of new units that can boost supply of privately owned and rented affordable homes. 2. Explore ways to influence traditional models of land ownership to lock in housing land use and prevent affordable homes being lost to the market. 3. Unlock the development of sites for housing (including, but not exclusively, small/urban) by considering options such as bundling of sites, custom/self-build and affordability ratios. <p>It is suggested that the Commission use a specific site/sites to explore the above issues in-depth to then extend the learning across the city.</p>
Outcomes	<p>The Commission will identify solutions that will help to improve the supply of affordable housing in both the short, medium and longer term.</p> <p>Each work strand will result in a series of tangible policy recommendations. These recommendations must add value to the following objectives:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing the supply of housing, particularly affordable housing, in the city Making the best use of Bristol's land assets Empowering the council to explore alternative routes of funding and creating a market within the city for alternative investment Budget planning, where appropriate Developing more effective working relationships with our key partners <p>The Commission's recommendations will feed into the future Bristol City Council Housing Strategy and the work of Homes4Bristol.</p>
Membership	Lead Commission Team	<p>Assistant Mayor - Cllr Mark Bradshaw Service Director, in support – Nick Hooper Executive Office support – Lucy Fleming & Dave Clarke</p>
	Expert Panel	<p>Commission Members;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nick Horne, CEO Knightstone Housing – <i>in the Chair</i> Chris Brown, CEO Igloo Regeneration – Innovative Development Professor Martin Boddy – Pro Vice Chancellor Research & Business Engagement, UWE Bristol David Ashmore – Former Chief Executive of Green Square Group Oona Goldsworthy, Chair of Homes for Bristol & CEO United Communities David Warburton, Homes and Communities Agency Guy Timberlake, Homes4Bristol, Lloyds Bank Rachel Fisher, National Housing Federation Stephen Teagle, Galliford Try <p>Notification of Commission</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministers. Core Cities reps and local/national media – as appropriate.
Supporting information and activity (primary and secondary key reference)		<p>Other Housing Commissions:</p> <p>Southwark – Chaired by housing lawyer Jan Luba QC, http://www.southwark.gov.uk/info/200463/community_conversations/2999/lets_talk_about_the_future_of_housing/2</p> <p>RICS – chaired by Michael Newey, RICS President Elect and CEO, Broadland Housing. RICS has established a commission to recommend ways of delivering the right homes, in the right tenure, in the right places. Report published 24th June. - http://www.rics.org/uk/about-rics/what-we-do/influencing-policy/policy-positions/rics-housing-commission-report/</p> <p>Lambeth – Chaired by the Cabinet Member for Housing. http://www.lambeth.gov.uk/Services/CouncilDemocracy/MakingADifference/HousingCommission.htm</p> <p>The recommendations of the Homes Commission will read across the following:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fairness Commission• Affordable Housing Delivery Framework• HRA investment strategy• Corporate Strategy (draft)• BOB Housing strand• Budget Process• Property Board & Strategic Property outcomes• Landlord Services
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Appendix 4: List of Expert Witnesses to the Commission

Listed alphabetically by surname:

- Keith Annis, Planning Director, Redrow Homes
- Chris Brake, Policy and Project Officer, Landlord Services, Bristol City Council
- Chris Brown, CEO of Igloo Regeneration (Commission Member)
- James Chaffner, Alder King
- Mike Day, Director of Development & Home Ownership Knightstone Housing Group and Managing Director Arc Homes
- Nicky Debbage, Service Manager, Strategy, Planning & Governance, Landlord Services, Bristol City Council
- Rachel Fisher, National Housing Federation (Commission Member)
- David Freer, ATLAS
- Simon Gait, Linden Homes
- Kevin Gibbs, Bond Dickinson
- Robert Grundy, Savills
- Nick Hooper, Service Director, Strategic Housing, Bristol City Council (Commission Member)
- Tony Oakely, Senior Relationship Director, Lloyds Bank
- Cathy Osborn, Savills
- John Paterson, Ark Consultancy
- Stuart Ropke, Assistant Director of Policy & Research, National Housing Federation.
- Edward Rowberry, John Pontin Trust
- Nigel Rule, Aviva
- Phil Stephens, Director of Development, Sovereign Housing Group.
- Neil Taylor, Interim Strategic Director, Regeneration, Bristol City Council
- David Warburton, Homes & Communities Agency & Bristol Property Board (Commission Member)

Appendix 5: Supporting Documents and Background Information Considered by the Commission

- Contextual presentation by Nick Hooper, Bristol City Council, Service Director, Strategic Housing.
- Development models and funding streams: Position Paper for Bristol Homes Commission, Briefing – National Housing Federation, October 2013.
- Draft Affordable Housing Delivery Framework, 2013-2018, Bristol City Council and Homes 4 Bristol, October 2013.
- Major housing sites with planning permission at 1 April 2013 (incl. unsigned S106) not started and under construction, August 2013.
- State of the Housing Market in Bristol 2013, Bristol City Council.
- Innovative Financing of Affordable Housing: International and UK Perspectives, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, March 2013
- An Overview of Mayoral Commissions.
- Corporate Priorities and Medium Term Financial Plan 2012/13-2014/15, Bristol City Council.
- Homes Commission Assessment Matrix, Nick Horne
- Format for Q&A Sessions with Expert Witnesses
- Housing the Nation: Changing the Mindset, Claire Dickenson, Director Quod.
- Affordable Housing Delivery Framework – Business Case, Bristol City Council.
- Resale Covenant Schemes, David Warburton, Homes and Communities Agency
- Home Truths, 2013/14, The Housing Market in England, National Housing Federation
- Treating Council Housing Fairly: How changed borrowing rules can help build more homes and boost the economy, National Federation of ALMOs, November 2013.
- Presentation - Delivering Strategic Asset Management – and increasing the supply of new homes, Robert Grundy/Cathy Osborn – Savills
- Presentation – Custom Build – Igloo, Chris Brown.
- Future work programme

BRISTOL SPORTS COMMISSION

FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission's recommended actions and priorities **for 2014** are to:

- 1. Establish independent, city-wide Sports Partnership Body*
- 2. Complete sports facilities and playing pitches strategies*
- 3. Unlock more facilities for more people to use*
- 4. Extend School Sports Games*
- 5. Bid to host 2019 Cricket World Cup*
- 6. Bring at least one other major event to Bristol*
- 7. Develop a sports events strategy*
- 8. Win more sports development funding for Bristol*
- 9. Promote women's and girls' sport*
- 10. Celebrate 2014 sporting achievement*

Foreword for the Mayor of Bristol



Last year I announced the establishment of a number of Mayoral Commissions in Bristol to look at key policy areas. Since this announcement we have set up a number of these Commissions, each one representing key priorities for the city, and specifically areas where we must do more to break down the barriers that risk holding us back from achieving our true potential. As I have said in my vision for the city, activity brings huge health benefits but beyond that there are also wider benefits – tackling isolation, for example. For children it is proven that being well fed and active are key determinants of being able to thrive and achieve at school, and sport is a major factor in engendering a sense of community.

I asked Council officers to assemble a cast-list of some of the most knowledgeable and gifted individuals who could help advise us on each of these areas, and was delighted to see the calibre of the people who were willing to give up their time and contribute so freely to the debate. Bristol owes them a huge debt of gratitude.

I will now review the findings of the Commissions and consider them as part of the Council's policy making process. I have asked officers in the Council to review the recommendations and advise on how we might implement them, giving due regard to financial, legal and other considerations. I will also ask the Council's Overview & Scrutiny function to advise my Cabinet and me on the recommendations. This draws in the perspectives of a wider cohort of Councillors representing all parts of the city – which is an opportunity to add further richness to the proposals coming forward.

Finally I would like to use this opportunity to thank each member of the Sports Commission for their substantial contribution. I am confident this work leaves the city better prepared for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'George Ferguson'. The signature is stylized and fluid.

George Ferguson

Mayor of Bristol

1. Executive Summary & Recommendations

The power of sport

Sport - in all its forms - has the power to transform the lives and opportunities of people who live and work and study in Bristol. It already reaches into communities, into businesses, into schools, colleges and universities, into health and other public services, into charities and faith organisations, and into the development of new homes, offices, sports facilities and new transport infrastructure for the city. **Bristol's sports partners want it to reach further and do more.**

Sport strategy

Bristol:Sport4Life was endorsed by the Mayor and Cabinet in December as a city-wide strategy for sport and active recreation for the period 2013-2018, based on a vision that Bristol is a successful city of sport and active recreation where people are healthy and motivated to participate for life.

Mayor's Sports Commission

The Mayor invited a Sports Commission to examine the role that sport plays in Bristol, and asked it to recommend how sport might play an even greater role in the city's future. The Commission convened in October 2013, and has looked in detail at 19 key issues linked to making sport work for Bristol.

Recommendations

The Commission makes the following recommendations:

Sports Partnership Body

That key partners should move quickly to establish a new Bristol sports partnership body that has the mandate, independence, resources and responsibility to better enable organisations and communities to achieve their own goals and deliver the aims of *Bristol:Sport4life*.

That this partnership body should be established in the first instance as a Mayoral Sport Board, with an independent chair, and aim to become incorporated as a Community Interest Company (CIC) within 12-24 months of its formation.

That its membership is drawn from a diverse range of organisations, communities and individuals who reflect and respect every citizen, and who have the most to bring to growing sport participation across the city.

2014 Priorities - facilities, participation, events

That there are **ten** immediate and pressing priorities for 2014:

- bring work on the Sports Facilities and Playing Pitches strategies to a conclusion;
- seek opportunities and agreement with sports facilities owners and operators, including schools, to unlock facilities for extended use by clubs and communities;
- support/extend existing School Games programme, with a focus on increasing the number of inter-school sports competitions across Bristol;
- bid to host 2019 Cricket World Cup games in Bristol;
- secure commitment from at least one other sports governing body to bring major sports events to Bristol;
- prepare and complete Bristol sports events strategy;
- establish Bristol sports partnership body as above (incl. terms of reference, legal form, membership/composition, action plan, budget & resources, appoint staff);

- ensure that sports development and facility projects meet funding partner criteria (e.g. Sport England, national governing bodies, commercial and charitable partners, developer contributions);
- differentiate Bristol as a true leader in women's sport - promote Bristol women's and girls' sport and participation; and
- celebrate sporting achievement in Bristol in 2014.

2. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present the Mayor's Sports Commission recommendations regarding:

1. the form, composition, terms of reference, structure and membership that a new city-wide strategic sports body might best adopt in order to enable the delivery of *Bristol: Sport4Life*; and
2. the key next steps that the Commission and any successor body should instigate in order to accelerate the execution of *Bristol: Sport4Life*.

As background to these recommendations, the report summarises the context and key issues that the Commission has investigated.

3. Background and Context

i. Bristol:Sport4Life

Bristol: Sport4Life (published 2013) provides a broad, strategic framework for delivering a city-wide sport and active recreation strategy. It was endorsed by the Mayor and his cabinet in November 2013.

Bristol: Sport4Life aspires to a vision that, “by 2018, Bristol will be a successful city of sport and active recreation where people are healthy and motivated to participate for life.”

Its purpose is to identify evidence-based priorities and to provide a simple structure within which partners and stakeholders can collaborate and pool their efforts. It calls on partners to engage and get involved in tackling these priorities.

Bristol: Sport4Life targets sport and active recreation in all its forms, from active recreation to organised participation and elite and competitive sport.

More people taking part in more sport and active recreation more of the time is an end in itself in the context of sport. Increasing levels of week-on-week participation in sporting and recreational activity is the bottom line - people across all communities and demographic groups spending more time being physically active and taking part in sport in all its forms.

However, *Bristol:Sport4Life* places sport in the widest context, aiming to link increased participation, more major events and better facilities to many other important issues, including health, wellbeing, education, skills, achievement, aspiration, safety, planning, economic development, the visitor economy, innovation and investment. Sport has a part to play in all these areas.

ii. Sports Commission

A Sports Commission was established in October 2013 as one of four commissions asked by the Mayor to investigate issues of strategic importance to the city (the others being Homes, Fairness, Education & Skills).

The stated purpose of the Commission was to:

- advise the Mayor how he might seek to raise sporting aspiration 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;
- 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;
- help the council unlock an array of benefits in relation to health and wellbeing, social cohesion and sporting endeavour;
- agree partnership and governance arrangements for Bristol: Sport4Life and develop an action plan; and
- consider and advise on the priorities for Sport England investment funding and help secure match-funding contributions as required.

A summary of the issues that the Commission has examined follows at section 4 below.

iii. Mayor’s vision and priorities, and the Bristol 20:20 plan

The Mayor has presented a powerful, ambitious and challenging vision for Bristol, building on a unique heritage and tackling weighty problems - equalising life expectancy between one part of the city and another, raising educational attainment, unblocking transport infrastructure so that people

can move around more quickly and cleanly, and bringing average earnings and house prices closer together.

The Mayor's vision for 'people' is based on the twin priorities of keeping Bristol working and Bristol being a healthy and caring city.

His vision for 'place' is based on building successful places and keeping Bristol moving.

The vision for 'prosperity' is based on a vibrant Bristol marking its year as Green Capital in 2015.

The Bristol 20:20 Plan complements the Mayor's vision by aspiring to see Bristol established as one of Europe's top 20 cities by 2020. It prioritises reduced health and wealth inequalities, raised aspirations and achievements for children, young people and families, prosperity that lasts and is sustainable, and a city of strong and safe communities.

Sport has its part to play in making a reality of these visions. Being recognised nationally and internationally as a successful sports city is an important part of both.

iv. Bristol and sport in 2014 - a snapshot

Bristol compares favourably to England's other core cities when it comes to participation rates and the quality and availability of sports facilities per head of population.

It compares less favourably in terms of success at the highest levels of popular men's professional sports, and outperforms most other cities when it comes to women's elite sport.

It has an abundance of volunteer-supported community sports clubs.

It contributes its fair share of elite athletes, coaches and performance specialists across Olympic and other sports.

But it experiences significant differences in levels of participation from one community to another, and - although favourable relative to other core cities - there is a significant proportion of the population that remains inactive.

In other words, it is a mixed picture. In absolute terms, Bristol is no better or no worse than other comparable English cities. It does not stand out from the crowd nationally and internationally as a city that makes sport work for its communities, its public services and its businesses...yet.

4. Issues - summary of Commission's work

The Commission examined some 19 issues in detail, with assistance from invited experts, over the course of four meetings between October and December 2013.

Issue	Key points
Attracting more sports investment, funding and sponsorship in and to Bristol	<p>There is potential to attract more financial support and investment in Bristol sports facilities and programmes to drive increases in sport and active recreation participation levels.</p> <p>The Commission recommends that a new sports partnership body co-ordinates partners' efforts to attract investment, funding and commercial sponsorship across all aspects of sport.</p>
Facilities and infrastructure	<p>There are enough indoor and outdoor sports facilities in Bristol to meet current demand. Pressure will increase, however, as the population of the city grows, and as participation rates increase. The quality of facilities, particularly as they come under increased pressure, requires attention.</p> <p>The Commission recommends that partners work to open the use of, and access to, existing facilities (owned and operated by a range of partners) rather than a programme to develop and open new facilities.</p> <p>The Commission is excited by the availability of an arena facility, and noted the interest in new major facilities, such as an ice rink/snow sports facility.</p>
Schools	<p>School-level education, and the sports facilities that schools own and operate, are vital to growing participation across the city. It is also possible to raise attainment, achievement and aspiration by learning through high-quality physical education, sport and competition.</p> <p>The Commission recommends that steps are taken to explore the scope to make all schools' and HE facilities more available on a reciprocal basis for community use. It also highlights the opportunity to extend intra- and inter-school competition, and recommends that schools are an immediate focus for partners' efforts to accelerate the delivery of <i>Bristol: Sport4Life</i>.</p>
Participation at all levels	<p>Growing rates of week-on-week participation in sport and active recreation is the over-arching objective of public authorities and agencies with a direct or indirect involvement in sport.</p> <p>The Commission expects that the aim of getting more people to take part in more sport and active recreation more of the time remains the principal criteria against which investment decisions are made and progress is measured.</p>
Inequalities and barriers to participation	<p>Although Bristol-wide participation rates compare favourably with other core cities in England, this masks significant inequalities in participation between different communities, both demographic and geographic. These inequalities in participation rates mirror those in other public policy areas, including health and education.</p> <p>The Commission recommends that partners' interventions prioritise these inequalities, and that a new sports partnership body works to reduce them by identifying and removing barriers to participation in sport and active recreation.</p>

Issue	Key points
Public Health	<p>Sport has obvious links to public health. Inequalities in health, including a 10-year difference in life expectancy rates between some parts of the city, are of particular concern. Insufficient levels of physical activity amongst the population as a whole, and particularly within certain groups, is a primary factor in many health-related conditions.</p> <p>The Commission would like to build stronger collaboration and mutual effort between sports partners and public health agencies so that increasing levels of participation in sport and recreation plays a bigger part in shaping a healthier population and workforce.</p>
Transport	<p>The city's transport infrastructure plays an important role in enabling access to sports facilities, clubs and venues. Careful and imaginative transport planning can also make a positive contribution to raising levels of participation and physical activity.</p> <p>The Commission recommends that sport and active recreation remains a key consideration in improving the city's transport networks and working with operators.</p>
Community Clubs	<p>There are hundreds of community sports clubs across Bristol. These are the lifeblood of community sport and participation for the city.</p> <p>The Commission would like to see stronger links between local clubs and schools, and it noted the potential for community clubs to grow and develop if they had access to more capacity and support.</p>
Segments - women's sport and participation	<p>There is a vast range of communities and population segments across the city of Bristol, each with differing interest and opportunities to participate in sport. There are notable inequalities in access and participation levels.</p> <p>The Commission wishes to underline the value of fully embracing the rich diversity of the city's history and communities in establishing a partnership and action plan that will implement <i>Bristol: Sport4Life</i>. In particular, it recommends that Bristol gives special attention to the unique position that women's sport currently occupies in Bristol compared to other core cities. It also recommends that participation and events in disability sport are prioritised.</p>
Involving business	<p>Business has much to offer and much to gain from more active communities, a fitter workforce, and a successful sporting city.</p> <p>The Commission is keen to see more opportunities for local, national and international businesses to invest in sport at every level across the city.</p>
Role of professional clubs and community schemes	<p>The city's professional sports clubs, as well as those that compete at the top of their sport but remain largely amateur, operate at the elite, junior and community ends of sport.</p> <p>The Commission hopes that all of the professional clubs will engage and contribute to achieving the goals of <i>Bristol: Sport4Life</i>. In return, it expects that partners' efforts to improve sporting infrastructure and facilities across the city will help clubs to compete successfully both nationally and internationally.</p>
Insight, evidence and understanding	<p>A substantial body of evidence was prepared to support the development of <i>Bristol: Sport4Life</i>.</p> <p>The Commission recommends that partners' insight and understanding of the factors that determine participation and excellence in sport is strengthened further through the work of a new sports partnership body.</p>

Issue	Key points
Enabling sports partners and stakeholders to achieve their own goals	<p>There are many organisations across the city that are directly or indirectly involved in the provision of sports activities, facilities and initiatives. It is important that this body of activity and investment continues without impediment, overlap, delay or duplication.</p> <p>The Commission recommends that the principal role of a sports partnership body is to better enable these organisations to achieve their own goals and, in doing so, deliver the goals of <i>Bristol: Sport4Life</i>.</p>
Engaging key partners	<p>There are a number of organisations that will have a critical role in raising participation levels.</p> <p>The Commission noted that the city's two universities have a particularly important role to play, and should be invited to engage actively with partners to achieve the goals of <i>Bristol: Sport4Life</i>. Bristol City Council, Wesport, Sport England, Bristol businesses, professional clubs and the national governing bodies of Sport in England (NGBs) are key partners.</p>
Co-ordination, collaboration and strategic oversight	<p>There are many and various facets that will make up a comprehensive programme of activities and initiatives designed to drive up participation levels and put sport and active recreation at the heart of efforts to make Bristol a better city for all who live and work here.</p> <p>The Commission recommends that a new sports partnership body be given the task of bringing partners together so that the outcome of their combined efforts and resources is greater than the sum of their parts.</p>
Workforce	<p>Although there are many professionals involved in running sports, facilities and education, volunteers are, again, the lifeblood of community sport, participation opportunities and events.</p> <p>The Commission recommends that specific initiatives and collaborations to celebrate, develop and support a volunteer workforce is established in the partnership body's first full action plan.</p>
Celebrating Bristol's sporting success	<p>The achievement of Bristol's sportsmen, sportswomen, teams, administrators and volunteers is recognised through events and media coverage.</p> <p>The Commission encourages partners to make more of this, and to work with each other and local media partners to celebrate the success and achievements of Bristol's athletes.</p>
Events	<p>Bristol has bid for and hosted national, international and world-class events in frequent years, with many partners engaging proactively and committing significant financial support and resource. Bristol has a positive reputation nationally for bidding.</p> <p>The Commission recommends that partners build on this by developing an events strategy and bidding programme. It recommends in particular that Bristol should bid to host matches in the 2019 Cricket World Cup (bids required in 2014).</p>

The Commission identified the following additional issues, but did not have the sufficient time to examine them in enough detail to make firm recommendations:

- elite sport;
- sport pathways (talent identification and development);
- ability sport;
- coaching and performance;
- sports science & medicine; and
- sport administration.

5. Insight, understanding and baseline measurements

A substantial body of information and data exists, having been compiled and analysed during work to shape *Bristol: Sport4Life* and a facilities strategy.

In relative terms, Bristol performs well against national and other core city averages. Most notably, 39.6% of adults took part in at least 30 minutes of sport per week in 2012 - this was 3.6% above the national average and the joint highest rate of the eight core cities in England.

In absolute terms, there is substantial scope for levels of participation in sport and active recreation to grow, for levels of inactivity to be driven down, and for inequalities between communities and groups to be reduced. Although 43.8% of Bristolians being inactive in 2012 made the city the most active of England's core cities, it means that nearly half of the population remain physically inactive.

A selection of the most compelling statistics and facts relevant to raising sports participation follows:

- the population of the Bristol local authority area is increasing - it is projected to grow from 428,000 to half a million people in the next 20 years;
- 8.3% of Bristol's population is students, a rate which exceeds the national average;
- over one quarter of school children are from black, asian and minority ethnic groups;
- more than one quarter of children in Bristol live in poverty - this is notably higher than the national average;
- 14.7% of Bristol's population were born outside the UK;
- there is a gap of 10 years in life expectancy rates for men between the city's most affluent and most deprived communities;
- approximately one quarter of people living in Bristol live in areas that are classified amongst the most 20% deprived areas nationally;
- nearly 10% of Bristol's population have long-term health conditions or disabilities which limit their day-to-day activities;
- 6% of children fail to achieve 5 or more GCSEs at grade A-C because they live in Bristol; and
- health statistics confirm that obesity is a major contributing factor to poor health outcomes in Bristol - 59.1% of adults are overweight, and 22.7% are obese.

6. Stakeholders and Partners

There are many organisations across and beyond Bristol who have a stake in making sport work better for the city and in driving up levels of participation. Achieving the goals for *Bristol: Sport4Life* depends on the willingness of these organisations to work together and their ability to achieve their own challenging objectives.

A new sports partnership for the city should include at the very least all organisations whose direct investment of time, reputation, expertise and money will deliver a return for themselves and the city as a whole. These organisations will be open to higher levels of scrutiny in relation to their respective investment. Returns for these organisations will take the form, for example, of year-on-year increases in participation and reductions in inactivity, increasing funding and investment coming to the city, reducing costs of public services, increasing levels of educational attainment and aspiration, more and better sports facilities and infrastructure, increasing levels of wellbeing, or a growing reputation as a host and organiser of major national and international sporting events.

These (Tier 1) stakeholders include:

- Bristol City Council;
- Sport England;
- NGBs of sport; and
- Wesport.

A second set of (Tier 2) associated stakeholders and partners should include:

- professional clubs and associated bodies (BSL);
- professional clubs' community trusts/foundations;
- other semi-professional national league-level clubs;
- schools (including those under LEA, academy and independent control respectively);
- businesses, commercial sponsors and their representative organisations, including the WoE LEP;
- public health services;
- universities;
- colleges;
- community sports clubs;
- disability sports clubs and charities;
- young people's services, charities and trusts;
- facilities operators; and
- neighbouring local authority areas.

A third set of (Tier 3) partners from beyond the city will have a vital part to play in making a reality of *Bristol: Sport4Life*, either through awarding funding or investing in facilities and events - including eg:

- Youth Sport Trust;
- BOA;
- UK Sport;
- Sport and Recreation Alliance;
- EU Commission;
- international governing bodies of sport and sports events; and
- government agencies and departments.

7. Recommendations

i. A Bristol Sports Partnership

The Commission recommends that an independent city-wide sports partnership body is established without delay to better enable organisations across Bristol to work together to achieve the aims and objectives of *Bristol: Sport4Life*.

ii. Purpose

The Commission recommends that the purpose of this partnership should be to enable organisations and communities across Bristol to deliver the goals of *Bristol: Sport4Life* by taking a strategic approach to the development of sport and participation across the city.

Its primary purpose will be as enabler of partners' activities, projects, events, collaborations and initiatives that lead directly or indirectly to more people in Bristol participating in more sport and active recreation more of the time. Its purpose will be to provide support and help that will enable partners to achieve their own goals in line with *Bristol: Sport4Life*.

The Commission expects this partnership to provide a single, unified and strategic force for the growth and improvement of sport and active recreation in Bristol.

It will do this by focussing on:

- access to and the development of sports facilities of sufficient quantity and quality to meet growing demand;
- attracting and delivering events to and in Bristol;
- the part that schools have to play in increasing participation;
- attracting sports inward investment and funding to the city;
- building strong sports partnerships and sponsorship;
- insight and intelligence about sports participation and infrastructure; and
- establishing strong governance and organisational practice.

iii. Legal form

It is important that the most suitable legal form is chosen, so that the body is fit for the purpose of executing the agreed strategy and realising the full potential of Bristol as a city of sport and active recreation.

Although it is an option for a partnership to remain unincorporated, either as a partnership or an unincorporated trust, the Commission recommends that it is established with the aim of achieving legal form within two years so that it has the ability to enter into funding and contractual agreements and to employ executive staff. In the first instance, the Commission recommends that a partnership is established as a Mayoral Sport Board.

The Commission has considered the benefits that incorporated Trust/Company Limited by Guarantee and Community Interest Company models offer in light of the likely activities of a partnership seeking to achieve the goals of *Bristol: Sport4Life*.

A Community Interest Company (CIC) is a 'social enterprise' form of company created to direct its profits and assets specifically for the benefit of the community it serves. It is subject at set-up to approval as a CIC by a regulatory body, to which it must report annually. In the case of a Bristol sports partnership body, its beneficiaries would be local communities across (and perhaps beyond) the Bristol local authority area.

The incorporated Trust/Company Limited by Guarantee model would allow a partnership body to operate as a charitable trust. A new legal form - a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) - is now available, which achieves the benefits of incorporation without the requirement for dual registration with Companies House and the Charity Commission.

Having appraised and considered these options, the Commission recommends that an unincorporated partnership body is established, initially taking the form of a Mayoral Sport Board, with a view to it eventually taking the form of a Community Interest Company.

iv. Membership & composition

Membership of a partnership should be drawn from organisations and individuals within and beyond the city who have the most to offer to efforts to achieve the goals of *Bristol: Sport4Life*.

The Commission strongly recommends that the composition of a partnership and constituent groups reflects the diversity of Bristol's population, communities and sporting interests.

It recommends that the following organisations/interests are invited to form the partnership at the outset, with others to follow as the partnership establishes form and momentum:

- Bristol City Council
- Wesport
- Universities
- Business
- Professional Clubs
- NHS Trusts
- representatives of Bristol's schools, including academies and independent schools
- Sport England

v. Key attributes

The Commission expects that a suitable sports partnership body will demonstrate the following attributes:

- *independence* - the partnership should be independent of, but accountable to, other key organisations;
- *enabler, unblocker and catalyst* - the partnership's principal purpose should be as an enabler
- *influence and traction* - the partnership, through its members and credibility, should have influence across the city
- *diversity* - the partnership should reflect the interests and views of all groups and communities across the city
- *strategic* - the partnership should be strategic, with responsibility for a mix of activities and initiatives that will deliver the goals of *Bristol: Sport4Life*
- *direct deliverer and developer* - where necessary, the partnership should have the ability to deliver projects itself as well as enable others to do so
- *partnerships* - the partnership should enable collaboration that allows Bristol and its surrounding local authority areas to achieve more than the sum of its parts
- *talent* - the partnership should look to attract and make use of the richest talent that is available to it within and outside the city
- *hunger* - the partnership should demonstrate a hunger to achieve the goals of *Bristol: Sport4Life*
- *vision* - the partnership should maintain a clear vision for the part that sport and participation should play in Bristol's future
- *openness and accountability* - the partnership should be accountable through transparent reporting structures and process to all stakeholders across the city

vi. Immediate priorities - facilities, participation and events

The Commission has in mind an extensive and ambitious programme of work that would, in time, achieve the goals and aspirations of *Bristol: Sport4Life*. However, until a partnership body has been effectively constituted and is itself able to consider and define the detail of a long-term work programme, the Commission recommends the following ten immediate priorities under the four broad headings of facilities, participation, events and governance and funding for the period from 1 April to 30 September.

Priority Recommendations, April-Sept. 2014

FACILITIES	PARTICIPATION	EVENTS	GOVERNANCE & FUNDING/OTHER
F1. Complete Bristol Sports Facilities and Playing Pitches strategies.	P1. Support/extend existing School Games programme, with a focus on increasing the number of inter- and intra school sports competitions across Bristol, and working with the Primary Head Teachers Association to ensure that more schools access existing opportunities.	E1. Bid to host 2019 Cricket World Cup games in Bristol.	G1. Establish Bristol sports partnership body (incl. terms of reference, legal form, membership/ composition, action plan, budget & resources, appoint staff).
F2. Seek opportunities and agreement with sports facilities owners and operators, including schools, to unlock facilities for extended use by clubs and communities.		E2. Secure commitment from at least one other sports governing body to bring major sports events to Bristol.	G2. Ensure that sports development and facility projects meet funding partner criteria (e.g. Sport England, national governing bodies, commercial and charitable partners, developer contributions).
	P2. Differentiate Bristol as a true leader in women's sport. Promote Bristol women's and girls' sport and participation.	E3. Prepare and complete Bristol sport events strategy.	G3. Celebration event, building on Wesport's Celebration of Sport evening.

Further to this, the Commission has considered a number of other proposals and initiatives, and recommends that a partnership looks at the following in more detail:

- establishing and promoting a Bristol schools standard for children's activity levels;
- working with professional clubs/community schemes to replicate the Scottish Football Fans in Training programme;
- bring key local sports development delivery agencies together to explore opportunities for multi-agency sports development and delivery;
- work to ensure that disability sport thrives across the city;
- seek to influence Bristol's strategic planning framework so that it better reflects the city's sporting infrastructure and facility requirements and opportunities; and

- develop schemes that better support and promote the chances of young and aspiring elite athletes and teams.

v. Name/brand

The name/brand of the body will be important. The name should be immediately recognisable, and should create strong and positive associations. Depending on the chosen legal form, options include:

- Bristol Sports Alliance
- Bristol Alliance for Sport
- Bristol Sports Partnership
- Bristol United
- Bristol Sports Trust
- Association of Bristol Sport
- More Sport Bristol

Education & Skills Commission	
External Consultation	<p>The commission carried out the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dec 2013 & Jan 2014: consultation with young people to explore their experiences and priorities (four focus groups, joint meeting with Commission members, an online survey attracting 270 responses in 17 days). • Mar 2014: consultation on draft recommendations with a number of key stakeholder organisations in the city (two half-days of feedback through workshops, with c 20 people each time, 'strategists' and 'implementers'). • Expert witness presented to the Commission throughout its lifespan.
Equalities	<p>Gender may need to be considered in more depth as an omission which ought to be rectified as the Council takes this work forward, looking into employment barriers for BME young people and disabled young people. For example when looking at skills gaps (page 16) there is a future need to consider job prospects for young women if the main job vacancies relate to construction, building and automotive jobs. Subject choice is heavily gendered in Bristol therefore if future jobs do not relate to traditionally female subjects then a lot of work will be needed to encourage girls (and their families) to fill the skills gaps. We need to make sure the Passport for Employability and the IAG offer is relevant for young women, BME young people across all communities and disabled young people and that whatever plans are made, that expertise on the planning groups is sought from the outset and is not delayed pending further research.</p> <p><i>Anne James, Equalities & Social Inclusion team</i></p>
Eco Impact Assessment	<p>From the information provided, there are no environmental impacts arising.</p> <p><i>Steve Ransom, Environmental Programme Manager</i></p>
Finance	<p>Any costs to Bristol City Council of implementing the findings have not been assessed and therefore Finance Officers are unable to comment. Any findings from the Commissions that ultimately become recommended BCC policy will be required to undertake the necessary financial due diligence prior to being considered by the Mayor / Council for adoption. A business case will be developed prior to implementation to ensure the cost/benefit of the findings are fully assessed.</p> <p><i>Mark Taylor, Service Director – Finance</i></p>

Legal	<p>Mayoral Commissions provide evidence-based information to the Mayor/Cabinet in order that they can consider whether they wish to progress any recommendations made by the Commissions. Any decision would be made by the Mayor individually, through Cabinet or through an officer with delegated authority.</p> <p>Any recommendations requiring changes to documents within the Policy framework will have to be approved by full Council in accordance with the Policy and Budget framework rules.</p> <p><i>Shahzia Daya, Service Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer, Legal (Place)</i></p>
Land/property	N/A
Human Resources	<p>Within the context of promoting employability of young people in the city, it is important that Bristol City Council considers its own role as an exemplar recruiter, and further work should seek to identify what employment strategies Bristol City Council should adopt to attract more young people to work within the Local Authority.</p> <p>While some mention is made of specific actions for particular equalities groups, further work should consider some targeted actions to promote employability among hard to reach groups or groups with particular disadvantages across the city.</p> <p>It does not appear from the paper that the establishment of partnership arrangements to promote employability will have an impact on staff within Bristol City Council. Should this be found not to be the case, any action that arises from these recommendations that affects Bristol City Council staff should be implemented with appropriate consultation and in line with Bristol City Council's policies and procedures.</p> <p>Aside from the above, there are no further HR implications arising from this paper at this stage.</p> <p><i>Alex Holly, People Business Partner</i></p>
<p>Comments from relevant service area(s)</p> <p>The Commission's recommendations appear to be a thorough and critical assessment of strengths and weaknesses in the city, and the focus on solutions is helpful.</p> <p>Bristol is well placed to do this work and the timing potentially is good: PEBL and the Engagement Hub could form key elements of the Learning City.</p>	

We would be interested in developing both initiatives in partnership, rather than just the Engagement Hub.

We are keen to ensure this work would be accessible to all stakeholders including eg that parents have opportunities to better understand the issues facing their children.

- To assess the viability of the two main recommendations, including for example undertaking a 'cost / benefit analysis', scoping out detailed work, and/or piloting initiatives. Responding to the other two recommendations appropriately.
- Officers anticipate taking forward recommendations forward, linking to the Learning City developments and the Ofsted 14-19 Area Review follow-up, as falls within their remit, as well as returning to Cabinet with firm proposals later in the year.

Paul Jacobs, Service Director Education & Skills

Fairness Commission	
External Consultation	<p>The commission carried out the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External expert witnesses from national and local organisations in the areas of research and support on poverty, social exclusion, health and economic inequalities plus local parents from Children's Centres and Clients from Local Food Bank attended a range of meetings to talk about their knowledge and experiences that helped to inform the recommendations. See full Fairness Commission report appendix 2 for more details. • The Commission didn't have time to consult externally on the final recommendations but would like to engage the City in a dialogue about them.
Equalities	<p>The Public Sector Equalities Duty requires councils to give due regard to eliminating discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity and this report is welcomed as helping to fulfil this duty, offering a broad fairness perspective. The report alludes to a number of issues arising for women in the workplace (gender pay gap, over 90% of lone parents are women and that lone parents are disadvantaged in the labour market etc) which are welcomed. It is important that the recommendations for more decent part-time, jobshare and family-friendly employment opportunities overtly encourage more fathers and employers to take responsibility for the work & children balance and that any work emanating from the commission challenges the stereotype that women are responsible for children and organising childcare.</p> <p>The fairness commission had limited time and it is a disappointment that, similar to the employment and skills commission, it omitted detail on socio-economic disadvantage for BME communities, disabled people and LGBT communities. For example Department for Work and Pensions data highlight the unemployment rate for working age people across all ethnic minority groups was 14 per cent in 2012-13, compared to 7 per cent for white British people which is a significant gap of disadvantage. Additional activities and funding emanating from the commission needs to have more of a focus on narrowing the gap of economic disadvantage for BME communities and disabled people. As a starting point the recommendation for the Fairness Alliance should include reference to representativeness of the alliance members in terms of these two disadvantage communities and a commitment to diversity (similar to the model recommended in the Sports commission).</p> <p><i>Anne James, Equalities & Social Inclusion team</i></p>
Eco Impact Assessment	N/A

Finance	<p>Whilst recognising that the report seeks to prioritise existing funds, there is a concern that if enacted, the very large number of recommendations would have additional cost implications that will need to be fully explored, costed and then funded.</p> <p>New funding streams are not readily available to the Council and therefore would need to look across the City and nationally/internationally to see what additional resources could be achieved where appropriate.'</p> <p><i>Mike Allen, Finance Business Partner</i></p>
Legal	<p>Mayoral Commissions provide evidence-based information to the Mayor/Cabinet in order that they can consider whether they wish to progress any recommendations made by the Commissions. Any decision would be made by the Mayor individually, through Cabinet or through an officer with delegated authority.</p> <p>Any recommendations requiring changes to documents within the Policy framework will have to be approved by full Council in accordance with the Policy and Budget framework rules.</p> <p><i>Shahzia Daya, Service Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer, Legal (Place)</i></p>
Land/property	N/A
Human Resources	<p><u>Section 2 - a fair place to live and work</u></p> <p>BCC is already modernising its approach to Flexible Working. With the advent of the Bristol Workplace Programme (BWP), we are adopting a model whereby employees are encouraged to work in an agile way, which includes giving people the facilities to work at home where necessary and appropriate. The accompanying Travel Plan complements this, and we are working on ensuring that employees have the ability to move between locations in a flexible and accessible way through the use of such schemes as pool cars and the cycle to work scheme.</p> <p>BCC's recruitment policy addresses our public sector duty under the Equalities Act around equality of opportunity for citizens with protected characteristics. We are also starting to work more closely with educational institutions (including UWE and City of Bristol College). It is acknowledged that more work needs to be done on both improving the representativeness of our workforce compared with the city's overall demographics, and working more closely with young people across schools and further education institutions. It is important that BCC is seen as an employer of choice and is able to set an example for other employers across the city. This is a key issue that is being picked up by the Directorate Equalities Groups.</p>

BCC keeps its use of casual employment to a minimum (these are generally only used in, for instance, areas where it is important to maintain a staffing ratio - such as children's homes during periods of high sickness absence. However, it is acknowledged that this needs to be continually monitored and the use of casual contracts reduced where possible and safe to do so. (Some of these are zero hour contracts).

BCC is committed to flexible, family-friendly employment practice. All posts are offered as being suitable for job-sharing as a default position, unless there is a critical business justification otherwise. Furthermore, our flexible working policies allow for part-time working, reduced hours, nine-day fortnights, etc, and any employee has the right to make a flexible working request. However, this must be balanced with business need. The "Timewise" approach pioneered by Camden Council needs further exploration to understand if and how it could be adopted in Bristol.

Section 3 - Fair Wages

The Category Management workstream (that is seeking to drive better value) is currently looking in detail at agency usage across BCC, with a specific remit to bring down our agency costs. This is expected to deliver its recommendations within the next six weeks. As with the point on casual contracts it is understood that these are generally used on a minimal basis to ensure safety/staff ratios such as within children's or adults' social care services.

BCC is committed to being a Living Wage employer. For the last two years, a non-consolidated payment has been made to all staff whose basic salary is below the Living Wage, to bring them up to this level of payment. An approach to consolidating the Living Wage across BCC is being considered before the end of June 2014, with a proposal to be brought before SLT within the next six weeks. The Council would be supportive of other employers in the City achieving the same over time with sharing of understanding and good practice through bodies such as Business West.

The current pay ratio is 1:12.87, this was introduced following a recent review and included a reduction in the Head of Paid Service salary. Other than the work as above to achieve the living wage for relevant staff. It is advised that is not reviewed further at the current time.

Richard Billingham
Alex Holly

Comments from relevant service area(s)

These recommendations cut across the Council and are also focused on our partners and people in the City.

Ambition 1 (R1-12)

Clearly much of this report aligns with People Directorate wheel of intent and Education & Skills priorities directly and so we welcome that. Improving outcomes for disadvantaged or vulnerable children, young people and adults is part of our core business. I would want to see further work to align some of these recommendations with other commissions and corporate plan e.g. there are targets referred to in this report which are not necessarily a shared/agreed target. We also need to be mindful of some the explicit and implied funding requirements associated with many recommendations.

Paul Jacobs, Service Director – Education and Skills

Ambition 2 (R16 – 22)

There is huge scope to improve the targeting and take up of employment and skills services through more effective co-ordination and pooling of resources between other linked services. For example, health initiatives, digital inclusion activities, children's centres, sports development activities, housing, welfare and advice services all have a critical role in sign posting and supporting people, handholding them so they get improved access to services that will enhance their confidence, skills and employability.

Moving forward, there is growing interest in the development of a network of 'work zones/hubs' which pull together a range of employment, advice and skills services for targeted communities - discussions are already underway between the City Council and the DWP, and this could also tie together with the proposal to set up an 'engagement hub' focused on the Enterprise Zone identified through the Education and Skills Mayoral Commission.

In relation to ESOL, whilst we have been able to maintain some embedded ESOL in community based courses, what we have 'lost' is the more informal support that we were able to pilot through volunteer language mentors which was funded through the Migration Impact Fund. We would also like to see the development of more volunteer mentors and additional informal conversation clubs - potentially supported through a network of community groups, community learning providers and children's centres.

The role of employers in addressing poverty in local communities cannot be underestimated. More should be done to engage local employers to support their recruitment of employees from our most deprived neighbourhoods and communities. Employers have a huge role to play through sharing resources and providing expertise e.g. work coaches; work placements; venues for training; mock interviews etc.

Jane Taylor, Service Manager – Skills

Ambition 2 (R13-22)

I've discussed the summary with colleagues and we agreed that the recommendations are interesting, if highly aspirational. Those recommendations relating to employment support generally reflect the direction of work under way by the Council's Employment & Skills team. A number of specific points are listed below:

14 – BCC has a good record of engagement with developers through the planning system to ensure benefits for local residents in terms of jobs and training in both construction and end-use phases. Public support for this will strengthen our position in negotiations. Need to extend this to public sector procurement, so that all BCC procurement includes same provisions, within the limits imposed by national

16 – need to be clear about definition of 'local' - if this is taken to mean Bristol, then it is an excellent idea but if focusing only on very small areas the support will be diluted rather than reinforced

16a – first steps provision is valuable but it is essential that it include clear progression opportunities if it is to help individuals move into employment (danger of 'training carousel').

April Retter, Skills

Ambition 2 & 3 (R13a, 14, 23)

Support the Fairness Principles and Social Value Policy development to enable embedded approach to improving the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the local area building upon existing work.

Currently awaiting update on new EU Directives that may cut across this area. Already undertake a lot of dialogue with the VCS sector to improve access to contracting plus also have a good approach to engaging with construction sector to support local apprenticeship and employment opportunities. There is scope to do more to work with our public sector partners in the City.

Willing to explore Living Wage for contractors, but value advice and support to learn from good practice elsewhere, particularly as the Council moves towards major contract lets in Dec 14/Jan 15. Also legal and procurement would advise looking at a policy where LV for contractors is something relevant and proportionate to contract requirements.

Currently working through category management value plan so need to find way of achieving required savings within this approach.

Russell Ward, Procurement and Commissioning

Ambition 4

Although the pro-active work on the Welfare reform changes has been recognised it is suggested a more joined up approach to dealing with the consequences of welfare reform from the point of view of fairness will be helpful. This should help mitigate the impact of changes to state benefits, and also identify how to best utilise discretionary funds. A successful approach to economic inclusivity will help develop financial capability and sustainability for some of Bristol's poorest residents, thereby improving employment prospects.

A project entitled single view of the customer (Common Debt) has been initiated. It is proposed that the focus will be to maximise individual's income and offer a comprehensive support system for those in financial difficulty that will include referrals to other advocacy agencies and stakeholder groups.

Sheralynn McCarthy, Revenues and Benefits and Integrated Customer Services

Ambition 5

This report reflects well the public health priorities for the City as shared during the life of the Commission and how they align to other key factors (e.g. wealth inequality).

One action that could seek to support mental wellbeing is a national campaign called Time to Change, which is about challenging stigma around mental health. There is an opportunity for the Council and others in the City to sign up to this which could tie into a major national campaign going on this year, working with employers to address mental health in the workplace. There is a regional networking event about it in Bristol in September. Mental health is one of the biggest causes of sickness absence so there's a strong business case for addressing this.

Liz McDougall, Public Health

Ambition 5 (R40 & 42a)

The Council needs to have regard to the best way any asset it holds can contribute towards priorities. Therefore each asset needs to be appraised on a case by case basis. This would also be the case for our public sector partners in the City.

The Council doesn't have the capacity or easy way to review all its land assets to identify 'small areas of scrubland for community use', but it may be able to review any areas put forward by others. The highways estate in this case may offer some appropriate areas and if they are small and more difficult sites for anything more major then this could be an option.

Robert Orrett, Property

Ambition 5

My main comment would be that there is nothing really in Ambition 5 about the asset which is communities themselves. I would have expected to see something in there about supporting self-directed action? It shows we need to be clear about the focus of our own work around community resilience and empowerment/active citizens.

The VCS stuff pretty much maps against the work we are doing to re-shape out VCS investment through the use of a prospectus – we would seek to ensure we use common language in terms of articulating the priorities within the prospectus – this could be a strong delivery element.

Di Robinson, Neighbourhoods

Ambitions 1,2,4 & 5

R3b - *Break down barriers to schools being used as a community resource*: this is a long-standing issue that affects many communities; it relates primarily to access to sports facilities, ICT facilities and rooms/halls for meetings/events.

This is also directly related to:

R40 e. *The Commission supports the Sports Commission recommendations to seek opportunities and agreement with sports facilities owners and operators, including schools, to unlock facilities for extended use by clubs and communities.*

R42 a. *Continue to engage with local communities in thinking about how to share community assets – sharing resources between the council, statutory and voluntary providers, to include: buildings, training, IT systems and support. Community assets could be made available first to local community organisations before they are considered for other uses or sold off commercially.*

The council already actively looks at how buildings/land can be considered for community use (eg through the CAT Policy), but we have other assets too, eg the extensive high-capacity fibre network that covers a large part of the city (BNET). The council should consider how it can use this to bring increased employment, learning and wealth opportunities to disadvantaged communities through the use of this underrated resource.

Seeking out opportunities to improve 'community infrastructure' should be embedded within each council service and dept. Many of the report's recommendations depend on adequate infrastructure being available within local communities.

The report has already identified:

R40:

- *b. Convert patches of scrubland space for community use*
- *c. Support food growing initiatives for health and recreational benefits including those such as community orchards*
- *g. identify opportunities for use such as community kitchens*

R32:..... *pop up services within communities to encourage local employment, spend and access to services.*

The issue of physical accessibility gets very 'light' treatment in the report. Perhaps this reserves more emphasis, particularly when it comes to making better use of existing resources, such as BPAC (Bristol Physical Access Chain) and similar organisations in Bristol. The report includes:

R17b - Ensure all premises are DDA compliant and that there are employment opportunities for disabled people.

The council's existing Environmental Access Standard needs to be embedded within the work of all council services and depts. Despite having been in existence for nearly 10 years, its implementation is still very patchy, with some council services not even aware of its existence and significance.

The council is well placed to use its wide range of resources to benefit all communities, particularly those the most disadvantaged.

We welcome this report and we look forward to working with colleagues from across the council to achieve its recommendations.

John Bos, Neighbourhoods – Community Assets

Homes Commission	
External Consultation	<p>The commission carried out the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Homes Commission heard evidence from 21 expert witnesses, 17 of which were external to the Commission. The Homes Commission also consulted with the Citizens Panel on Affordable Housing issues in April 2014 and held a stakeholder conference in May 2014 for individuals and organisations with an interest in housing delivery. The results of the consultation exercises have been reflected in the report and recommendations of the Commission.
Equalities	N/A
Eco Impact Assessment	N/A
Finance	<p>The recommendations to the Council by the Homes Commission are varied and their financial impact will depend on the options selected for action and the extent to which each option is exercised. There is scope for additional costs to be borne by the Council and for the Council to receive less than full market value for land in return for meeting targets. Once recommendations are made, a detailed assessment of costs can be made.</p> <p><i>Mike Allen, Finance Business Partner</i></p>
Legal	<p>Mayoral Commissions provide evidence-based information to the Mayor/Cabinet in order that they can consider whether they wish to progress any recommendations made by the Commissions. Any decision would be made by the Mayor individually, through Cabinet or through an officer with delegated authority.</p> <p>Any recommendations requiring changes to documents within the Policy framework will have to be approved by full Council in accordance with the Policy and Budget framework rules.</p> <p><i>Shahzia Daya, Service Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer, Legal (Place)</i></p>
Land/property	Implications for land/property would need detailed consideration depending on the recommendations we take forward.
Human Resources	<p>Overall, minimal HR implications. However:</p> <p>Recommendation 12 – Programme management. It is important that robust workforce planning activity takes place to ensure that there is sufficient capacity within the Programme Management Office to support this work.</p>

Recommendation 13 – New organisational arrangements. Ongoing monitoring of the service impact of the organisational restructure is taking place to ensure that essential capacity and expertise is not lost through this process. It is important that any issues arising from the organisational restructure which are deemed likely to impact the effectiveness of this plan are raised as early as possible so that they can be addressed.

Other than the above there are no immediate HR implications arising from these recommendations.

Alex Holly, People Business Partner

Comments from relevant service area(s)

LAND AND SITES SUPPLY

Recommendation 1 – Proactively looking for opportunities to create additional housing land and site assembly options

Housing Development - Supported, as is recognised that the last Corporate Asset Review was undertaken in 2008 and that there is an outstanding need for a further review of all the Council's assets to identify future housing and other development opportunities.

Planning - This is a process that can helpfully fit into the local planning process. It is necessary to identify supply in the private and public sector over 15 years for local planning purposes. In carrying out a review of all land and estate, some parameters would be useful so that the land search is not so extensive as to be unmanageable.

Whilst creative thinking to release sites is desirable, very complex arrangements or aspirations may encounter practical delivery issues. Early priorities would perhaps be best focussed on the more deliverable and achievable sites, such as the numerous sites allocated for development in the Council's Local Plan. For information, over 100 sites allocated for development are included in the Council's Local Plan which provide development opportunities for 9,000 new homes (examples of sites include Bristol Temple Quarter 2,200 homes, Hengrove Park 1,000 homes, Hartcliffe Campus 300 homes, land at Broomhill, Brislington 300 homes)

Some background information on recent housing delivery which may be helpful – in 2103/2014 1,289 homes were completed (411 more than the previous year); 2,030 homes were under construction (409 more than previous year) and 6,249 homes had planning permission

Housing Delivery - have a land database that includes over 300, mostly small, sites that may have development potential. We are carrying out a comprehensive assessment of these sites to bring them into our new build programme or identify other solutions, including combining with other land packages to deliver more holistic schemes. We are seeking additional project resources to support this work and have established an internal panel to ensure all relevant factors are taken into account when assessing sites.

Recommendation 2 - Enhancing the role of the Bristol Property Board

Housing Development - Supported in principle, subject to new resources being made available to employ a suitably qualified property professional to take this forward.

Recommendation 3 – Creating a Revolving Investment Fund to support Stranded Assets

Housing Development - Supported, please note this an AHDF 'action' which is currently being implemented as the Affordable Housing Revolving Fund. It is planned that this will be formally launched in September and will make available three year interest free loans principally targeted at registered providers. Bristol Property Board could establish a similar fund available to the wider house building industry.

Planning - It would be helpful to identify the 'stranded' sites so that resources can be prioritised and focussed. Again it may be helpful in the earlier stages to focus on bringing forward clearly deliverable sites, with a longer term approach to more challenging sites.

Recommendation 4 – Creating value from regenerating brownfield/greyfield areas of land and sites

Housing Development - Supported, this proposal could be taken into account when the next Corporate Asset Review is undertaken

Planning - The Area Green Space Plan/Neighbourhood Committee process of 2010 – 2012 identified relatively few areas of underutilised public amenity land which could be brought forward. Those sites which were identified are allocated in the Council's local plan. More information on the sites which are described as underutilised would be helpful. The Commission may have identified them in its report

Recommendation 5 – Preparing an annual Prospectus for Housing

Housing Development - Supported, this proposal is similar to an AHDF action which has been implemented however due to uncertainty on the sites identified has not yet been published as a prospectus.

Recommendation 6 – Establish a specialist stalled site unlocking team in the Council

Housing Development- Supported in principle, subject to resources being identified from existing teams in Place

Planning - Where an owner has exercised permitted development rights for conversion to housing purely for asset value reasons there may be no intention to implement. There is a risk of effort being wasted on unwilling landowners, or ones whose development aspirations are in fact for other forms of use. It would generally be helpful to prioritise unlocking activities based on the likelihood of success – in order that scarce resources are deployed to best effect.

PLANNING FOR HOUSING DELIVERY

Recommendation 7 – Developing and nurturing an alternative homes sector

Housing Development - Supported, please note this an AHDF 'action' which the Mayor endorsed in December 2013 and suggested that part of Hengrove Phase 2 could be made available for custom build/ self build activity. Council officers are aware of a number of community led housing initiatives such as Shaldon Rd in Lockleaze and Astry Close in Lawrence Weston that are arising from local people considering what form of homes they wish to encourage through their Neighbourhood Plans. Finally the Mayor is looking for an "ideas factory" during the European Capital Year in 2015 with exemplar housing schemes rather than specifically workshops.

Planning – With respect to the recommendation that within 6 months, where a neighbourhood plan has been prepared and approved communities should be actively encouraged to use the Community Right to Build or other mechanisms such as CLT to bring the development to fruition - this could be considered at an earlier stage in plan preparation.

Housing Delivery - are working with a Neighbourhood Planning Group to use an HRA site for a community led development

Recommendation 8 – Prioritise delivery of more homes in the short term and more affordable homes over the longer term

Housing Development - Not supported. The Council has recently, as an AHDF 'action', completed a revision of its planning policy in respect of affordable housing. The new Affordable Housing Practice Note provides developer with much greater flexibility and a new definition of affordability. It is not considered that a further review or a moratorium on affordable housing delivered through the planning system will be helpful in achieving the Homes Commission and AHDF's objectives.

Housing Delivery – Housing Delivery's experience of mixed tenure development involved the inclusion of overage clauses – meaning if private development turned out to generate a greater profit than anticipated the city council were able to benefit from an increased receipts – this could be used to potentially secure S106 contributions.

Recommendation 9 – Ensure new homes planning targets over the longer term are both supported by robust evidence and are planned for on a sub-regional basis

Housing Development - Supported, however the four WOE authorities have commissioned ORS to undertake the SHMA once this has been completed Bristol will have the evidence base to commence reviewing its Core Strategy. The other UAs will commence their reviews shortly after Bristol

Planning - This work in underway – the SHMA is being prepared and a joint strategy is proposed.

Recommendation 10 – Compulsory Purchase Orders

Housing Development - Supported in principle, subject to new resources being made available to employ a suitably qualified officers to take this forward. It is recognised that it is important that the Council works closely with the HCA to take advantage of

their ability to acquire sites more easily.

LEADERSHIP AND SYSTEMS

Recommendation 11 - Creating a 'Results-not-Process' Culture

Housing Development - Supported, however there is an AHDF action to progress 12ha of corporate land per annum to deliver mixed tenure schemes has been thwarted by a number of process and policy barriers which urgently need to be addressed

Planning - It would be helpful to identify the perceived process and policy barriers so that this recommendation could be acted upon. Perhaps they are set out in the Commission's report. Certain policy 'barriers' may be statutory requirements or policy position that have been prepared through processes involving stakeholder consultation, reflecting the views of local communities

Recommendation 12 - Introduce end-to-end programme management

Housing Development - Supported in principle, however this does not take account of the newly constituted Affordable Housing Programme Board and the restructure of the Economy Division in the Place Directorate. The accountability for housing delivery now resting with the Economy Service Director and the responsibility with the Housing Development Manager – as the AHDF Programme Manager.

Recommendation 13: Post implementation review of new organisational arrangements

Housing Development - Supported.

Recommendation 14 – Ensure robust accountability and scrutiny for implementation of the Affordable Housing Delivery Framework

Housing Development - Supported in principle, it should be noted that the Economy Service Director is accountable for delivery of the Affordable Housing Delivery Framework and has a direct reporting line to the Assistant Mayor through his weekly informal briefings. In addition the Mayor receives half yearly progress report on the AHDF implementation and the Assistant Mayor quarterly reports. The proposal for an appropriate body to externally scrutinise the work of the Council in delivering the AHDF is welcomed but will need to be investigated further

Planning - A process review is perhaps not consistent with Recommendation 11 which seeks a results-not-process culture.

MAKING BEST USE OF STRATEGIC ASSETS

Recommendation 15 - Government should raise or eliminate the HRA borrowing cap imposed upon the Council and it should enable land and other asset transfers from general account to HRA account on the same basis as available to Registered Providers

Housing Development - Supported, the Council will continue to lobby for greater financial freedoms on the HRA account and assistance with transfers from general account to the HRA

Housing Delivery - very much welcome this recommendation. In particular removal of the requirement that any land transferred into the HRA from the General Fund needs to be at market value which limits and overly complicates some options to make more effective use of council land for new homes

We would also welcome the greater freedom and flexibility that raising or removing the debt cap could have on the HRA's ability to build, However, a note of caution – affordable housing cannot be funded by borrowing alone, it does not add up and has to be subsidised (e.g. by revenue surpluses from existing homes or receipts from sales). Therefore even without the debt cap our ability to borrow to build would still be limited

Recommendation 16: Council Wide Review of Land and Property Assets for Potential Housing Development

Housing Development - See earlier response to Recommendation 1

Planning - This is a process which can feed into the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment which is used for local planning purposes to identify potentially deliverable site for residential development purposes

Housing Delivery - very much welcomes this approach and we have, through the Affordable Housing Delivery board which brings colleagues together from Place, People & Neighbourhoods, begun to pursue the idea of land swaps between the HRA and GF

Recommendation 17 - Complete the Housing Revenue Account Asset Review to examine the impact of releasing some stock to create more new homes

Housing Delivery - was restructured to ensure that resources were in place to support full and effective asset management and review and we have developed process to ensure regular assessment of asset performance can be undertaken. Negative net present value stock will be subject to full option appraisal to assess a range of options and identify the best future solution for homes

Housing Delivery - has undertaken significant disposal of poor performing stock – over the last 20 years we have disposed of around 3,000 homes. Schemes have included the sale and reinvestment of receipts of 200 high repair cost acquired homes, the demolition of 300 prefabs and the redevelopment of 900 homes through a cross subsidy/cross tenure scheme, and the demolition and disposal of over 2,000 homes to other housing providers. These options will continue to form part of our option appraisal of stock.

Housing Delivery - The Council does not believe that it is in its strategic interests to pursue any large scale stock transfer. Additionally, any stock transfer of tenanted homes requires a ballot and for a majority of the affected tenants to vote in favour of such a transfer, Indications from previous discussions with tenants is that there is no desire from tenants to transfer and any such vote would not be successful. However, Housing Delivery will continue to consider the partial stock transfer as an option for groups of homes identified through asset review. 'Trickle transfer' of vacant homes may also be a potential option for some types of stock.

Recommendation 18 - Fully examine the Municipal Housing Company model

Housing Development - Supported, however the Affordable Housing Programme Board has recently agreed to commission legal support in investigating how the JV models will work most effectively when the Council disposes of its corporate assets.

Recommendation 19 – Review action to bring more empty private homes into use

Housing Development - Supported in principle, subject to resources being identified from existing teams in Housing Solutions and Crime Reduction

FUNDING HOUSING DELIVERY, SUBSIDY AND AFFORDABILITY

RECOMMENDATION 20 – The Commission recommends that the Mayor should lobby Central Government for new local freedoms to control and use the housing elements of Universal Credit in the context of the City Council's revenue and capital spending programmes to enable new investment in the provision of affordable rented homes.

Housing Development - Supported

Housing Development = Tim Southall, Housing Development Manager

Planning = Zoe Willcox – Service Director, Planning and Sustainable Development

Housing Delivery = Nicky Debbage, Service Manager, Strategy, Planning and Governance

Sports Commission	
External Consultation	<p>The commission carried out the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Sports Commission had broad membership including sporting professionals and representatives of community sports groups. In addition, the Commission had access to the portfolio of evidence that had recently been prepared for the Sport and Active Recreation Strategy, which included comprehensive details of the types of sports activities available in the city and also the level of participation for various groups. The Commission supplemented this information by inviting a range of expert witnesses to provide details in relation to health, education, transport and equalities.
Equalities	<p>This report gives due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity through its explicit focus on increasing participation of disadvantaged communities, its emphasis on the importance of disability sport and its commitment to promote Bristol's success in women's elite sport. The recommendations will also improve relations between different communities through inter-school sports events and increasing access to sporting facilities. The commitment to the equality duty is strengthened by the recommendation that leadership of the partnership board should be both representative of different communities and also to prioritise participation from disadvantaged communities. It is anticipated, if implemented, the recommendations of this report would significantly improve the health, well-being and engagement of Bristol's equalities communities in sports and exercise</p> <p><i>Anne James, Equalities & Social Inclusion team</i></p>
Eco Impact Assessment	<p>Environmental impacts will arise from some of the sports commission recommendations – for example travel to sports events and venues. Detailed assessments of these impacts will be undertaken for future Cabinet reports, should the recommendations be taken forward.</p> <p><i>Steve Ransom, Environmental Programme Manager</i></p>
Finance	<p>The recommendations to the Council from the Sports Commission are varied and their financial impact will depend on the options selected for action and the extent to which each option is exercised. Once recommendations are made, a detailed assessment of costs can be made.</p> <p><i>Mike Allen, Finance Business Partner</i></p>
Legal	<p>Mayoral Commissions provide evidence-based information to the Mayor/Cabinet in order that they can consider whether they wish to progress any recommendations made by the Commissions. Any decision would be made by the Mayor individually, through Cabinet or through an officer with delegated authority.</p>

	<p>Any recommendations requiring changes to documents within the Policy framework will have to be approved by full Council in accordance with the Policy and Budget framework rules.</p> <p><i>Shahzia Daya, Service Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer, Legal (Place)</i></p>
Land/property	<p>Whilst the Sports Commissions has potential implications for BCC properties due to its context on pitches and facilities, there are no property specific matters set out. I am of the view that any input you may have from Environment & Leisure Services and Education should suffice.</p> <p><i>Robert Orrett, Service Director, Property</i></p>
Human Resources	<p>As the strategy develops, it will be important to understand the staffing models which will support the instigation of the citywide Sports Partnership, and whether this is likely to have an impact on Bristol City Council staff currently supporting the provision of sports facilities. However, at this stage, there are no immediate HR implications arising from this report.</p> <p><i>Alex Holly, People Business Partner</i></p>
<p>Comments from relevant service area(s)</p> <p>We support the need to set up an independent Sports Partnership Board that brings together all the organisations to achieve their own goals and deliver the aims of the Bristol: Sport4life strategy. The Partnership should sit outside all organisational structures and act as an independent enabler to achieve the outcomes. We agree this will require an independent Chair and membership will need to be drawn from the diverse range of organisations, communities and individuals who have the most to bring to growing sport participation across the city.</p> <p>The Sports Partnership does not need to be a separate entity in its self as it will need to bring others together to deliver the outcomes that they are trying to achieve, but by joining this up the City will be able to achieve more as a whole than everyone trying to work separately.</p> <p>The City Council will be one of the organisations that will sit on the Sports Partnership Board and will be one of the first organisations to commit. This will help enable the Partnership to function and set up its governance arrangements and then to deliver the enabling role to achieve the overall Sport4life outcomes as prioritised in the Commission's report.</p> <p>The Council commits to the following actions:</p>	

- Bring together the overview of sports facilities and playing pitches across the City. This will then allow the Partnership to look at supply and demand and focus on actions that would be needed to increase participation across the City.
- Work with the Partnership and schools to unlock schools sites for community access where schools will permit this.
- Influence / support schools to extend the existing School Games programme, with a focus on increasing the number of inter-school sports competitions across Bristol.

The Council have secured £40K of funding from Sport England to contribute to the Sports Partnership Board to set itself up as an independent board to enable the priorities to be delivered.

The Council will contribute 80 hours of officer time to co-ordinate meetings, and support the Partnership.

However, Bristol City Council needs to remain as an independent contributor to the Partnership as the goals of the Council are to work with deprived communities and increase participation in activities using sports as a mechanism to achieve this.

The Council has land and assets that it needs to control and will work with the Partnership to utilise these assets in the best way for the City to achieve its shared objectives, but it will also have to ensure that it is achieving the Council objectives and working within Council governance.

We propose that the Mayor appoint an independent chair to take forward the recommendations from the Commission's work. The Chair to convene and set up the Partnership, agree Terms of Reference with them and put in place the governance to appoint any support required. Evidence of the £40k spend should be provided to Bristol City Council who will relay the information to Sport England.

Tracey Morgan, Service Director, Environment and Leisure