



**Agenda Item No: 4**

# **Bristol City Council Minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Management Board**

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2014 at 4.00pm

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## **Members Present:-**

Councillor Pearce (Chair), Councillor Alexander, Councillor Bailey, Councillor Goulandris, Councillor Hickman (Substitute for Councillor Jama) Councillor Holland, Councillor Hopkins, Councillor Lovell, Councillor Malnick, Councillor Martin, Councillor Mongon.

**Officers in Attendance:-** Nicola Yates, City Director, Max Wide, Service Director – Business Change, John Readman, Service Director – People, Barra Mac Ruairi – Service Director – Place, Alison Comley – Service Director – Neighbourhoods, Michele Farmer, Policy, Strategy and Communications, Paul Taylor, Service Manager, Policy Research and Scrutiny.

## **1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillor Jama and it was noted that Councillor Hickman would substitute.

## **2. Membership of the Board**

**RESOLVED - that the membership for the 2014/15 Municipal Year be noted.**

## **3. Board Chair.**

**RESOLVED - to note that Councillor Pearce was confirmed as Board Chair for 2014/15 municipal year at Full Council on 10 June 2014.**

## **4. Election of Vice Chair.**

Councillor Hopkins was nominated and seconded. There were no further nominations.

**RESOLVED - that Councillor Hopkins be elected Board Vice Chair for the 2014/15 municipal year.**

**5. Public Forum.**

A statement was received from Laura Welti representing the Bristol Disability Equality Forum regarding the value of co-opted members of equalities forums on Scrutiny Commissions. The Board heard from the Statement maker.

**RESOLVED - that this matter be considered as part of Item 11 – Scrutiny Work Programme 2014/15 report.**

**6. Declarations of Interest.**

There were none.

**7. A. Minutes of 20 March 2014.**

Councillor Holland referred to Minute No. 97.03/14 regarding the use of £500k agreed in the budget in relation to Children's Centres and whether this had been earmarked for staff redundancies. The Mayor agreed to put in writing his intentions but she had not heard anything on this matter.

The Chair agreed to follow this up with the Mayor along with any other outstanding actions.

It was noted that Councillors Bailey, Goulandris and Holland had attended the last meeting and were therefore able to declare the minutes accurate.

**RESOLVED – that the OSMB Minutes of the 20 March 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.**

**7. A. Action Sheet.**

As noted above, the Mayor agreed to follow up the action raised by Councillor Holland, along with other outstanding actions relating to the Mayor.

**RESOLVED – the Chair to follow up actions relating to the Mayor.**

**8. Whipping.**

There was none.

**9. Chair's Business.**

The Chair stated that he was happy to be given the Chair of OSMB as he believed it an important role in delivering the work programme and managing resources and he hoped for good quality engagement.

He expressed concern regarding the lack of resources available to support the West of England Scrutiny Committee and felt that this inadequacy might be seen as a reason to refuse funding. He therefore asked that ways of improving matters be investigated.

At this point, Councillor Hopkins arrived.

**10. Overview and Scrutiny Management Board Annual Business Report 14/15.**

The Democratic Services Officer highlighted the key points for decision.

**RESOLVED –**

- 1. The Board's Terms of Reference was noted.**
- 2. The dates of meetings were agreed as proposed, all at 6pm:-**
  - I. 16 October 14**
  - II. 5 February 15**
  - III. 9 April 15.**
- 3. The arrangements for handing call-in's were agreed.**

At this point, Councillor Alexander arrived.

**11. Scrutiny Work Programme 14/15.**

The Service Director, Policy, Strategy and Communications reported that Scrutiny members had recently attended a Scrutiny Workshop in order to shape a draft Work Programme. The exercise was a new way of working but had gone well. The report before the Board was the first draft of that programme for Board comments.

The Chair took the opportunity to thank members that took part in the workshop and to officers who had planned and ran the event. He added that it was intended to keep the most recent version of the Work Programme on Alfresco so that members could access it at any time.

At this point, the Mayor arrived.

There was a detailed discussion and the following points were highlighted:-

- All Commissions to bring forward as early as possible consideration of the Mayoral Commissions' recommendations to avoid delay in the good work undertaken;
- OSMB to be briefed on West of England working as there were concerns regarding levels of resource available;

- The Board agreed not to formally co-opt equalities representatives but Commission Chairs be informed the need to plan ahead in order to engage equalities groups early enough to make a difference;
- OSMB to add Community Engagement Programme to their Work Programme;
- It was agreed that Mayoral Fairness Commission was cross cutting and should therefore sit in OSMB's Work Programme;
- It was agreed that the new constitutional arrangements should be reviewed by OSMB at its February meeting. To this end, a questionnaire would be issued in January 2015 to Party Group Leads and Chairs and Vice Chairs of each Committee and Scrutiny Commission seeking their views;
- Place Commission to add Private Security arrangements at Council events, Green Capital, Cribbs/ Patchway Inquiry day, and review of Residents' Parking Working Group to their first meeting;
- Place Commission to add fuller scrutiny of Green Capital to their November meeting. The Mayor reported that there would be significant changes relating to the company set up by the City Council to progress Green Capital. There would be much more community engagement and consultation and real participation with the Green Capital Partnership. In relation to Green capital grants to Neighbourhood Partnerships (NP), the Mayor acknowledged that each NP was different regarding their issues and population and this would be taken into account with the grants issued;
- Business Change Commission to add Avon Pension Fund on two occasions. One so that City Council members could present their Full Council report and a later one for more detailed scrutiny;
- It was noted that Education and Skills had been lost from the plan and that this was needed as a joint inquiry day with People and Neighbourhoods;
- It was noted that health/public health had been lost from the plan and it was agreed to add to Neighbourhoods and People. The Strategic Director – People and the Strategic Director – Neighbourhoods to work closely with the Chairs of People and Neighbourhoods to ensure this area is properly reflected;
- It was agreed that Safer Bristol move from People to Neighbourhoods.

At this point, Councillor Bailey left.

Some members expressed concerns that the Work Programme was being shaped by officers with members having far less input than previously. The City Director stated that she wished to put the record straight in this public, minuted meeting on this matter. Officers had not proposed anything that did not have a route in what members had already looked at. The work programme had been drafted exactly as members had wanted. At no point had there been an attempt to stifle members' discussion of the work programme.

A Councillor accepted this but stated that members still required the ability to place something urgent on an agenda if it needed to be dealt with quickly.

There was also discussion regarding the effectiveness of West of England Joint Scrutiny. It was noted that some meetings were often cancelled at the last minute and there was a lack of proactive management which was unproductive. The City Director reported that a Joint Leaders' Board had been created as a public meeting in response to the need for greater transparency.

It was agreed that this matter be reviewed at the October meeting of the Board.

**RESOLVED - 1. That the Work programme 14/15 be endorsed, subject to changes detailed above.**  
**2. that Commissions do not proceed with formal co-opted members and instead ensure that Commission Chairs plan ahead to engage equalities groups early enough to make a difference.**  
**3. that arrangements in relation to the review of Licensing Policy be noted.**

## **12. Bristol City Council Corporate Plan 2014 – 17.**

The City Director reported that the Plan had recently been considered at a Scrutiny Workshop attended by the Mayor and Scrutiny members. The main issue raised had related to the equalities section of the plan and this had been revised to reflect members' wishes.

Due to the timing of this meeting and next week's Full Council, the Chair had agreed to report any comments from this meeting to Full Council.

The following points were made during discussion:

- Members were encouraged to note the inclusion of 'Addressing Inequality' as a major cross-cutting theme and that the document now recognised the critical importance of this to the city;
- It was agreed that the introduction and the 'state of the city' section should be reduced in order to balance out the document and give more prominence to the main objectives;
- The section entitled 'Prosperity' should include a broader set of objectives associated with supporting Bristol's economy, as currently these seemed limited;
- In the section about the 'flexible and enabling Council' more emphasis ought to be given to show how the Change Programme was driven by the need to redesign the organisation to effectively deliver this plan, as opposed to an emphasis on it being driven by reducing budgets or staff headcount;

- Key objectives of the Plan should signpost existing relevant strategies and plans, such as the Child Poverty Strategy or the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, for example. This should be clearly articulated in all delivery plans that sat beneath the Corporate Plan;
- The level of detail attached to each objective should be consistent throughout the document;
- All the facts and figures in the document should be checked and brought up to date;
- There needed to be a clear articulation of how the Plan was reviewed and refreshed on an annual basis.

**RESOLVED – that the Bristol City Corporate Plan be revised in line with the changes as detailed above and be resubmitted to Full Council for adoption.**

### **13. 2013/14 Mayoral Commissions' Reports and Recommendations.**

The Board reviewed the reports and conducted a discussion about general lessons to be learned from the process for managing the Commissions as well as views about how their work should be taken forward.

The following key points were made in terms of lessons learned:-

- For such a large volume of work, it was argued that some of the work had been done in a hurry and might have benefited from a more considered approach in places;
- This was particularly true for those recommendations that were not just about the Council's policies but which required buy-in and engagement with other partners across the city, which could take time;
- The involvement of Overview and Scrutiny in the process would have benefited from more thought from the outset. For example, in future members of Scrutiny could work with the Mayor to outline the brief for the Commissions' work;
- Members conveyed their concerns with the recommendations but also noted that it was important that they focus their discussion on the elements of the report that excited and inspired;
- Any future work on Mayoral Commissions needed to be carefully planned. Running four Commissions in parallel created a significant demand on officer time suggesting that in future a more phased approach, such as limiting activity to one Commission in any 12-month period, would prevent resource being diverted away from priority work.

At this point, Councillors Holland and Hickman left.

The following points were made in taking the Commissions' work forward.

- It was important that the work of the Commissions was not lost and that, when considering the reports on 5 August Cabinet, make best use of the capacity available in Overview and Scrutiny to review any recommendations the Executive was minded to progress in order to ensure that momentum was maintained;
- Members wished to ensure that, wherever possible in the Scrutiny work programme activity, the Commission recommendations were considered in detail and brought forward from the original date proposed in the draft Work Programme. It was also important to be clear about how recommendations/ findings were being progressed.

**RESOLVED – that the views of OSMB, as detailed above, be fed into Cabinet at its meeting on 5 August.**

**14. Outturn Performance Report 2013/14.**

The Chair agreed to defer this item to the October Board.

**15. Date of next meeting.**

It was noted as Thursday 16 October 2014 at 6pm.

END: 6.40PM