

# Bristol City Council

## Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board



18 October 2021 at 2.00 pm

### **Members Present:-**

**Councillors:** Carla Denyer (Chair), Mark Bradshaw (Vice-Chair), Martin Fodor, Geoff Gollop, Tim Kent, Brenda Massey, Steve Pearce and David Wilcox

### **1 Welcome, Introductions and Safety Information**

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting.

### **2 Apologies for absence.**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Graham Morris.

### **3 Declarations of Interest**

The following non-pecuniary interests were declared;  
Councillor Tim Kent declared that a family member had an Education Health and Care Plan.

### **4 Minutes of the previous meeting.**

The Chair advised that the Clean Air Zone had been omitted from the list of OSMB work programme items set out in the minutes from the 20<sup>th</sup> September 21 meeting, and that it would be brought to a subsequent meeting after the Council had received a response from Government about the proposals.

### **RESOLVED;**

That minutes of the meetings on the 12 July and 20 September 2021 be approved as a correct record.



## 5 Chair's Business

Councillor Denyer announced that she would be stepping down as Chair due to other commitments and that a new appointment would be made at the Full Council meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> November 21.

## 6 Public Forum

The following public forum was received;

### Statements

Ref	Name	Topic
S 1	Clive Stevens	Corporate Risk CRR32, Failure to deliver enough affordable homes to meet the City's needs (Agenda item 9)
S 2	Cllr Christine Townsend	Mayor's Forward Plan (Agenda Item 11)
S 3	David Redgewell, South West Transport Network and Railfuture Severnside, and Graham Ellis, Melksham Railway Group.	Transport
S 4	David Redgewell and Ian Beckey, South West Transport Network	Transport
S 5	David Redgewell, South West Transport Network and Railfuture Severnside	Transport

### Questions

Ref	Name	Topic
Q 1	Suzanne Audrey	Performance Report (Agenda item 8)
Qs 2 - 3	Clive Stevens	Corporate Strategy and Corporate Risk Report (Agenda items 7 & 9)
Q 4	Cllr Christine Townsend	Mayor's Forward Plan (Agenda Item 11)
Qs 5 - 7	Hayley Hemming	Special Educational Needs and Disability
Qs 8 - 9	Christina Biggs, Bristol Clean Air Alliance	Clean Air Zone

The following Supplementary Questions were asked:



Q2-3 Clive Stevens.

Clive Stevens asked a question in relation to a neighbouring council and good practice, and the Chair of Growth and Regeneration Scrutiny Commission confirmed that he had looked into contacting South Gloucestershire Council.

Q4 Councillor Christine Townsend.

Cllr Townsend asked about the impact a delay in mainstream secondary schools announcing the SEN places would have, and the Chair requested that officers respond in writing after the meeting.

## **RESOLVED;**

That;

- The public forum business be noted.
- The Chair of People Scrutiny Commission review Cllr Townsend's statement and raise with the Director of Education & Skills.

## **7 Corporate Strategy**

The Head of Policy and Public Affairs introduced the report of the Director: Policy, Strategy and Partnerships.

- Members commended the report and information made available commenting that this was a positive and helpful way of presenting an item and should be used as an example for future scrutiny topics
- The Board noted that the views of the Corporate Strategy Member Working Group had been clearly incorporated into the report, which was welcomed
- Members queried the date of the Quality of Life Survey used within the evidence base for the Strategy. Officers advised that the Strategy had been informed by last year's Quality of Life Survey, and that due to the annual timing of the survey, this year's results would feed into future plans, including the annual Business Plan.
- The Chair referred to HC2 'Lower Carbon Homes' and queried the decision to amend the phrase 'we will deliver carbon neutral homes' to 'we will deliver lower carbon homes'. Members were advised that this was to ensure commitments were achievable, but this would be referred to the service lead for a full response.



- There was a discussion around the number of responses to the consultation, including low rates in disadvantaged areas. Members enquired about the approach taken to engage people and heard that COVID-safe practices placed some restrictions on how the team could reach out to communities and that the usual activities such as physical presence in public spaces, could not take place.
- A Member raised the point that Ward Councillors had not been identified within the 'Community Participation' section, and recommended that the role of elected Councillors to enable participation should be recognised and utilised within the Strategy.
- The Chief Executive advised the Board that the Council had a good record of outreach and engagement; for example with the award winning budget consultations that had taken place. He added that Corporate Strategies tended to attract low interest from the public due to their generality, and it was noted that the response rate was higher than that of the previous Corporate Strategy consultation.
- Members referred to HC5 'Community Participation', welcoming the commitment to the importance of investment into the sector, and asked about the funding for 'greater investments in community-based organisations...' Members were advised this would be referred to the appropriate officer.
- The Board referred to ENV3 'Cleaner Bristol' and welcomed the commitments, which included making it easier for people living in flats to recycle and increasing the number of fly-tipping and litter enforcement officers.
- Clarification was sought on the rationale behind the decision to change the title of ENV3 'Waste Reduction' to 'Cleaner Bristol'; that the terms were not interchangeable and meant different things, and so there should be clarity on the commitment to one or both of these. Members were advised the heading was changed to 'Cleaner Bristol' as a result of the consultation and discussions which suggested the original term 'Waste Reduction' was not broad enough.
- Members asked for clarity on what was meant by 'economic growth', and were advised that the Corporate Strategy was centred around inclusive and sustainable economic growth as described within the document.
- The reference to the role of scrutiny in section ED05 'Good Governance' was endorsed by Members.
- Members queried specificity about the Council's contributions to the One City Plan, and heard that these were currently identified in detail within the annual Business Plan and this would continue. It was noted that the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board would consider the Business Plans later in the Municipal Year.
- It was suggested that a more explicit reference to social enterprise and social value within the Strategy would be helpful. Members were advised to consider the Strategy in conjunction with the Council's other policy documents, in this case the Social Value Policy.



- It was noted that the pandemic had highlighted financial exclusion as a particular challenge and Members recommended a specific focus on this area within the Strategy.
- The Board commented that community resilience was important within the context of COVID-19 recovery as set out in the Corporate Strategy, and that now was a good opportunity to underline the need for focus on this area.
- It was recommended that there should be more content and detail about the role of the Council owned Companies, and the Council's relationship with them.
- There was a discussion around CYP3 'Equity in education' and there was a concern that there was a disproportionate focus on universities, and there should be a greater emphasis on further education and other pathways to skills and employment. The Chair recommended that this section should be reviewed and noted that the Member Working Group had made similar points.
- A Member recommended that the ambitions within the TC2 'Improved Bus Services' section should have been reviewed within the context of the recent withdrawal of the No.5 bus service, which served areas of Bristol with the lowest rates of car ownership.
- Members referred to TC3 'Safe and Active Travel' and there was a recommendation that the word 'connected' was inserted where there was reference to 'segregated' networks for both cyclists and pedestrians.
- The Head of Policy and Public Affairs advised Members that the intention was that this would be a high-level strategy with aspirations and ambitions for the next five years, and that the detail would come from the Council's business planning process, which Members would review in the new year.
- Members were told that their engagement in the development of the strategic documents was appreciated and valuable.
- Members commended the process, and the way Officers had engaged with Members.
- Members recommended that, when the document referred to areas of land (for example '42 Sq miles' cited in the Foreword), comparisons and examples should be used so as to provide the reader with a sense of scale.
- Examples of typographical errors were raised and Members were advised that this was a working draft and all detail would be proofed before finalisation.



## 8 Corporate Performance Report Q1

The Chair recommended that, due to the cross-cutting nature of the items, the Corporate Performance and Risk reports (Q1) should be discussed together.

- It was agreed that OSMB's revised approach would be to identify concerns and prioritise items within the performance report, with reference to the corporate risk report, with a view to delegating to the relevant Commission to scrutinise in detail. This was a recommendation from the training Members recently received from the Centre for Governance & Scrutiny.
- It was explained that this approach would enable valuable scrutiny of performance by each Commission; and would provide an ability for relevant officers and Cabinet Members to attend and contribute to a scrutiny meeting where appropriate.

The Head of Insight, Performance and Intelligence introduced the Performance Report, and the Risk & Insurance Officer introduced the Risk Report.

- The Chair explained that the OSMB Lead Member had identified initial themes in the Performance report which required attention. These were;
  - BPC222 'Increase the take-up of free early educational entitlement by eligible 2 year olds'
  - BPB528 'Increase the percentage of employment offers made to people living in the 10% most deprived areas'
  - BPC541 'Increase the percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting'
- The Chair of the People Scrutiny Commission brought the Board's attention to Performance Indicator BPB225e 'Increase the percentage of Final EHCPs issued within 20 weeks excluding exception cases'; that, although this Indicator provided a positive performance measure, he thought there could be issues with EHCPs, and so the detail behind this indicator required further scrutiny and explanation. It was also suggested that this should be flagged as a higher risk.
- The Chief Executive stated that he and relevant senior officers were aware of the situation and growing challenge related to EHCPs, and provided reassurance that there was ongoing consideration of the issues.
- Performance Indicator BPB124a '% of major residential planning applications processed within 13 weeks or as otherwise agreed' was raised as a concern, as it potentially contradicted other goals, which included the ability to achieve positive outcomes from a negotiation process within the allotted time.
- There was a discussion about the wellbeing performance indicators and the Board was advised that some of the indicators that displayed 'Annual – data not due' were aligned with the Quality of Life Survey, and there were lags in some of the data fields, which would be reviewed early 2022.



- There was a discussion about ‘major threat’ risks which remained amber for four quarters and Members were advised that this would be passed to the risk owners and those which remained at the same score over a number of quarters were flagged and reviewed at Executive Director meetings.
- The corporate risk CRR42 ‘Provision of Leisure Centres’ was discussed within the context of the proposed closure of Kingsdown Leisure Centre. The Board was advised that the risk owner was responsible for the scoring of the risk, and the reporting period for this report was up to 1 July, which was before the closure proposal was known.
- The Chair recommended that the three critical threat risks, listed below, should be taken to the appropriate Scrutiny Commission for detailed Scrutiny;
  - CRR41 ‘Long Term Major Capital projects’ (Growth & Regeneration Scrutiny Commission)
  - CRR32 ‘Failure to deliver enough affordable Homes to meet the City’s needs’ (Growth & Regeneration Scrutiny Commission)
  - CRR9 ‘Safeguarding Vulnerable Children’ (People Scrutiny Commission)
- There was a discussion about the timeliness of performance reports; the Board proposed that, to enable valuable scrutiny, they should have sight of the reports in parallel with Cabinet Members, or as soon as possible after. It was agreed that this suggestion would be submitted to the 2<sup>nd</sup> November Cabinet meeting via a statement from OSMB.

## **RESOLVED;**

### **That;**

- Performance Indicator BPC541 ‘Increase the percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting’ and Risk CRR42 ‘Provision of Leisure Centres’ be referred to the Communities Scrutiny Commission;
- Performance Indicators BPB225e ‘Increase the percentage of Final EHCPs issued within 20 weeks excluding exception cases’; BPC222 ‘Increase the take-up of free early educational entitlement by eligible 2 year olds’ and BPB528 ‘Increase the percentage of employment offers made to people living in the 10% most deprived areas’; and Risk CRR9 ‘Safeguarding Vulnerable Children’ be referred to the People Scrutiny Commission
- Performance Indicator BPB124a ‘% of major residential planning applications processed within 13 weeks or as otherwise agreed’; and Risks CRR41 ‘Long Term Major Capital projects’ and CRR32 ‘Failure to deliver enough affordable Homes to meet the City’s needs’ be referred to the Growth & Regeneration Scrutiny Commission;
- That a statement by OSMB be made to Cabinet setting out the points outlined above in relation to various indicators; asking that consideration be given to sharing the performance data with Scrutiny as



soon as possible; and inviting Cabinet Members to join future performance discussions at the relevant Scrutiny Commission meetings.

## **9 Corporate Risk Report Q1**

The Chair recommended that, due to the cross-cutting nature of the items, the Corporate Performance and Risk reports (Q1) should be discussed together.

Refer to Performance report minute.

## **10 Work Programme**

The Chair noted that a Working Group had been convened to examine the Council's proposals for carbon reduction, and would meet in 2022.

The work programme was noted.

## **11 Mayor's Forward Plan - Standing Item**

Members welcomed the current version of the Forward Plan, which contained more details than previous iterations.

The Forward Plan was noted.

## **12 Minutes from the WECA Overview and Scrutiny Committee - for information (standing item)**

The minutes were noted.

Meeting ended at 4.47 pm

**CHAIR** \_\_\_\_\_

