

Bristol City Council

Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board



18 April 2023 at 2.00 pm

Members Present:-

Councillors: Tony Dyer (Chair), Mark Bradshaw (Vice-Chair), Geoff Gollop, Tim Kent, Steve Pearce, David Wilcox and Martin Fodor

1 Welcome, Introductions and Safety Information

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting and noted the emergency evacuation procedure.

2 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Graham Morris and Brenda Massey.

3 Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made.

4 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2023 were approved as a correct record.

Resolved; That the OSMB minutes of 3 March 2023 be approved.

5 Chair's Business

No Chair's Business was raised.

6 Public Forum



Suzanne Audrey submitted two public forum statements related to Item 7. Written responses were provided as part of the published Public Forum document.

A statement regarding the Scrutiny Annual Report was submitted and presented by Cllr Richard Eddy.

A statement regarding WECA and Bristol bus services was submitted and presented by David Redgewell.

RESOLVED; That OSMB note the Public Forum.

7 2023/24 Corporate Business Plan and Performance Framework

The Deputy Head of Policy and Strategy presented the Bristol City Council Corporate Business Plans. A workshop with Scrutiny Members had been held on 16th March 2023 to consider and provide feedback on a draft version of the Business Plan. The amendments made following the Scrutiny feedback were outlined. It was emphasised that the full range of feedback was considered for further and ongoing discussions. Scrutiny Members were thanked for their attendance and input at the workshop.

The Director for Policy, Strategy and Digital presented the Performance Framework. It was noted that City Measures had been introduced for metrics where Bristol City Council did not have full control but would continue to monitor. Annual Business Plan measures were also included. For the 2022-23 year, themed clinics had been held and presented to Scrutiny on a quarterly basis, and this was expected to continue for the 23-24 year.

Following the Scrutiny workshop some amendments had been made, including changing KPI 2 from Bristol City Council Measure to a City Measure. KPI 5 had also been clarified as council spend only. Following input from the Corporate Leadership Board a further KPI around compliance with financial management codes had been added.

Further work was anticipated around reporting. Work was underway on the development of a performance score card; an interactive dashboard accessible to both Officers and Members to provide real time progress updates. This was expected to support the timeliness of reporting.

Members were invited to comment and raise questions.

The Chair thanked the Officers and commented that the workshop had been a useful exercise. It was suggested that as the Council moved towards a committee model of governance that future development work be opened to all Members. The Chair also suggested that once the Business Plan was finalised that a hard copy be sent to all Councillors to ensure all were aware of the document and its contents.

A Member noted that WECA had been identified as a key partner and queried whether work had been undertaken to ensure the alignment of priorities and funding allocation. The Deputy Head of Policy and Strategy stated that while WECA was not part of the same approval pathway that regular communication



and touch points were made with WECA colleagues, including the sharing of draft documents. Officers noted that clarifying this relationship would be useful.

A Member noted that TC3 had identified the work underway for the East Bristol Liveable Neighbourhood but that the South Bristol project had not been included, which seemed like an omission. The Deputy Head of Policy and Strategy stated that this action would have been derived from service planning conducted in Autumn 2022 and agreed to discuss this with the relevant Service Managers as an action.

A Member noted that by not allocating actions in the business plan against all priorities identified in the Corporate Strategy that commitments had been made without demonstrating how they would be achieved. Extensive internal conversations had been held around the KPIs and where actions were assigned. The Director for Policy, Strategy and Digital reiterated that the KPIs track the long-term corporate strategy. The Chief Executive agreed with the position that the Council was facing significant financial difficulties which impacted delivery of the priorities, but that the Council was in an acceptable place in preparation for a move to a committee model system of governance.

It was noted that the Committee Model Working Group had proposed that the structure of future committees be themed against corporate priorities. This would be a challenge for Members, and training for both Elected Councillors and Officers for the type of matrix management needed to deliver this would be necessary.

A Member commented that the introductory paragraph of Theme 1 (Children and Young People) had noted the both the financial pressures on the high needs block, and also the need to improve SEND provision. The Member considered a tension between those statements due to the requirement for further funds to improve services.

A Member noted the reference to the partnership with the Integrated Care Board under CYP1, and queried the confidence in their ability to deliver, particularly considering the recent legal challenges around changes to autism diagnoses being out of step with NHS guidance. There was an interest and support for trauma informed care, with a query over whether this programme could be effectively delivered. The Chief Executive stated that in relation to the recent developments ongoing conversations continued to be held with Sirona and the Integrated Care Board, and acknowledged that further work around governance was needed. It was also recognised that the Integrated Care Board was facing significant cuts. A useful development had been the production of a draft Integrated Care Strategy which was intended to set a framework for the local system for care.

A Member raised a concern that had previously been brought to Scrutiny regarding the disposal of council owned properties. Properties in Capgrave Crescent and Rodbourne Road had been used as social work offices but also used by Foster Carers as safe spaces and contact centres, and they were concerned about the loss of this facility. The Member raised that the unintended consequence of the loss could potentially undermine the action to dispose of the building assets.



On Environment and Sustainability (p86) a Member queried why it was stated that it was not appropriate to set targets, and what levels the current emissions were at. The Deputy Head of Policy and Strategy confirmed that a response would be sought from the relevant Officer.

The choice to use Park and Ride passengers as a measure was queried. It was agreed that a response to this would also be sought.

It was noted that gender equality did not appear to be referenced frequently across the document. The Director for Policy, Strategy and Digital understood that this was present in the service plans, and it was agreed that these would be checked for detail. Gender equality in the workforce was identified as a KPI but without actions against it, so monitoring would continue.

A Member raised a concern that the language used in some parts of the Business Plan did not seem to accurately reflect the significant pressures on delivery. For example, under TC2 there was a target to improve local bus services, while Public Forum and other casework had identified that bus services were being cut. The Chief Executive agreed that while it was important not to confuse aspiration with reality, the vision for bus service improvement was agreed and work was planned to coordinate with WECA and examine proposals to effect this. It was suggested that the Cabinet Member for Transport would be in a position to discuss this further.

It was noted that under TC3 the income generated from CAZ was indicated as a potential funding source, but that this would not be known for the first 12 months. The Chief Executive stated that while the figure was not known it was reasonable to assume that income would be generated, and to plan appropriately around this.

A Member noted the action to establish a Parent Carer Forum under CYP3 (Equity in Education), but understood that this was already in place, and queried whether multiple forums were planned or required. This action was derived from the education service plan and it was confirmed that a response would be sought from the appropriate Officer.

The Chair thanked the Officers for the workshop and the report.

Resolved; i) That the Corporate Business Plan 2023-24 and associated Performance Framework be noted, and ii) that Officers note the comments and suggestions of the OSMB, and source responses to the queries raised, ie:

- **To note the request to send a copy of the finalised Business Plan to all Members**
- **To query the omission of the South Bristol Liveable Neighbourhood project under TC3**
- **To confirm the detail of reference to gender equality at the service plan level**
- **To query the action to establish a Parent Carer Forum**

8 2022/23 Scrutiny Annual Report



The Chair presented the Scrutiny Annual Report. A Member suggested that in future a greater emphasis be placed on policy development messaging to demonstrate the business achieved.

The Scrutiny Annual Report was unanimously approved for submission to Full Council.

Resolved; That the Scrutiny Annual Report 2022-23 be approved and submitted to Full Council.

9 Work Programme

The Scrutiny Advisor noted that the meeting was the last scheduled of the 2022-23 year, but that a Scrutiny workshop had been planned for 6 June 2023 to consider the 2023-24 year. Work had been ongoing in preparation for this.

A Member noted that an OSMB meeting and a Cabinet meeting had also been scheduled for the same day. It was clarified that the OSMB meeting was specifically to confirm the work programme immediately following the workshop.

A Member recommended consideration of how to most effectively work with WECA and WECA Scrutiny as part of work programming. This was noted.

A Member queried whether there would be sufficient information available to construct a 2023-24 work plan as only one item had been listed on the Mayor's Forward Plan after June 2023. It was thought that more information would be available by the time of the workshop, and that discussions were being held with Officers in advance in order to gather relevant planning information.

Resolved; That i) co-ordinated work with WECA is noted as an item of consideration for 2023-24 Scrutiny Work Programming, and that; ii) the Work Programme be noted.

10 Mayor's Forward Plan - Standing Item

The Mayor's Forward Plan was noted. The Chair stated that establishing relevant items with appropriate notice had been an issue with the Forward Plan. The Chief Executive acknowledged the issue and considered that it may have been exacerbated by the time of year.

A Member recommended the monthly refresh of a 12-month Forward Plan; the Chief Executive noted this as a useful suggestion.

A Member recognised the issues with the Mayor's Forward Plan but also noted the improvements that had been made over previous years. It was emphasised that with the move to a committee system a long sight of upcoming decisions would be necessary.

Resolved; That the Mayor's Forward Plan be noted.



11 Minutes from the WECA Overview and Scrutiny Committee - for information (standing item)

Resolved; That the WECA Scrutiny Minutes be noted.

Meeting ended at 3.15 pm

