

Bristol City Council

Minutes of the Economy and Skills Policy Committee



29 July 2024 at 2.00 pm

Members Present:-

Councillors: Andrew Brown (Chair), Jenny Bartle (Vice-Chair), Kelvin Blake, Mark Weston, Serena Ralston, Tom Renhard, Rob Bryher and David Wilcox

1 Welcome, Introductions and Safety Information

Cllr Brown welcomed everyone to the meeting and did a round of introductions.

2 Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Fabian Breckles, Councillor Toby Wells with Councillor Rob Bryher as substitute, and Councillor Paula O'Rourke with Councillor David Wilcox as substitute.

3 Declarations of Interest

It was noted that there were no declarations of interest.

4 Chair's Announcements

The Chair noted that this was the first meeting of the Economy and Skills Policy Committee which was taking place under a new governance system.



The Chair briefly updated Committee Members on the newly established Harbour Committee that he also Chairs, which had met for the first time on 23rd July. He noted that this was an advisory Committee which oversees the management of the Harbour. Committee Members would have the opportunity to review any key decision reports relating to the Harbour in order to make any comments or recommendations to the Economy and Skills Policy Committee ahead of taking any key decisions.

5 Public Forum

The Committee received and noted the following Public Forum submissions:

Questions:

Number	Name	Subject
PQ01 & PQ02	Martin Rands	Baltic Wharf Caravan Park development
PQ03, PQ04 & PQ05	Suzanne Audrey	Developments and regeneration
PQ06	Alan Morris	Local Plan
PQ07, PQ08 & PQ09	Prof. John Tarlton	Baltic Wharf Caravan Park development

Statements:

Number	Name	Subject
PS01	Peter Weeks	Conversation Clubs
PS02	Suzanne Audrey	Regeneration projects
PS03	Jill Tarlton	Baltic Wharf Caravan Park development

Public Forum Questions and Statements were presented by those in attendance. Questioners received verbal responses to their supplementary questions.

6 Economy and Skills Policy Committee: Annual Business Report 2024/2025

The Committee considered the annual business report for 2024/25.

The Committee RESOLVED;

1. To note the membership of the Economy & Skills Policy Committee for 2024/2025.



2. To note the appointment of Councillor Andrew Brown as the Chair of the Economy & Skills Policy Committee for 2024/2025.
3. To note the appointment of Councillor Jeny Bartle as the Vice-Chair of the Economy & Skills Policy Committee for 2024/2025.
4. To note the terms of reference of the Economy & Skills Policy Committee.
5. To note the Economy & Skills Policy Committee's meeting dates for 2024/2025

7 WE Work for Everyone Phase 3

The Committee considered a report that sought approval to hold detailed bid negotiations to secure essential grant funding from the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) to extend and maintain a specialist employment support programme designed to improve employment outcomes for Disabled people with Learning Difficulties and Autism across the West of England region.

Summary of main points raised/noted in discussion of this item:

- There was a discussion around the lessons learned from phases 1 and 2 of the programme and officers advised that they had reviewed the programme and would continue to refine the approach to ensure participants would receive the right support.
- It was confirmed that once participants enter the programme, they would receive up to 12 months of support.
- There was a discussion around the importance of co design which was a core principle for the programme. Officers are working alongside other public bodies like the NHS and are working towards building a network of employers who will support the programme.
- There was a discussion around the Work Well Vanguard and Members were advised that the Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) had selected Bristol to be a main delivery partner for this work.
- It was confirmed 23% of participants had secured paid employment through the programme which was higher than the national average of 5.7%.
- Officers advised that individuals do not require a formal diagnosis in order to participate in the programme and that self-referral was encouraged.

The Chair noted that this was the first key decision to be taken by the Committee and moved the recommendations as set out in the report. Councillor Jenny Bartle seconded this motion.

The Committee RESOLVED (unanimously) to;

1. To approve the proposal and authorise the Head of Service Employment, Skills and Lifelong Learning in consultation with the Committee Chair to negotiate with WECA and, if successful, to accept and spend funding of up to £1,835,500 (including procuring and awarding contracts) and lead on the regional implementation and delivery of the We Work for Everyone Phase 3 programme from January 2025 to March 2027.
2. To note the Director of Adult Social Care and the Director of Education and Skills will support the implementation of the WE Work for Everyone Programme, in partnership with specialist



providers and employers, to improve the employment outcomes of young people and adults with Learning Difficulties and Autism supported by the SEND and ASC teams.

8 Regeneration Service Update

The Committee received an update report on the planned activity in the regeneration service, which was for noting.

Officers presented the current priority projects in the service and noted that they would shortly be submitting a bid to the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) to develop a regeneration framework for Lawrence Hill.

Summary of main points raised/noted in discussion of this item:

- In response to questions, it was confirmed that once regeneration frameworks are complete, they would go out to public consultation before being brought to Committee for decision, and if approved, this would become material consideration in the planning process.
- With regards to Lawrence Hill, officers advised it was too early to confirm the number of homes to be delivered as part of the project, but transport would be a key consideration for the area along with how families live in urban spaces; the team would look at the Urban Living Design Guidance for best practice.
- There was a discussion around meanwhile uses where some businesses were displaced due to new developments.
- There was a discussion around the Western Harbour regeneration and Members were advised that plans were currently being developed and this would go out to public consultation in Autumn 2024 with the Committee taking a decision on the project in Spring 2025. **Action:** Officers to provide a briefing for Committee Members on the Western Harbour regeneration project ahead of the public consultation.
- It was noted that the regeneration team were working collaboratively with colleagues in planning and transport to deliver on all projects and whilst the report outlines the allocation of funding from Homes England, some elements of City Design will come from other funding streams.
- There was a discussion around the health provision and accessibility needs in developing regeneration frameworks and it was noted that this was something colleagues were working on; the team currently work with WECIL who audit the regeneration frameworks.
- There was a discussion around co-living design in the city and officers advised that they would encourage more applications for this type of development and would be looking at best practice nationally. **Action:** Officers to confirm if there is a minimum space standard for co-living.

The Committee RESOLVED;



1. To note the planned activity in the regeneration service as outlined in this report including securing £260k Homes England Funding to deliver priority projects within Bedminster Green, Whitehouse Street, Frome Gateway and the City Centre.
2. To note the regeneration service will be submitting external funding bids to deliver projects identified with the City Centre Development and Delivery Plan, Frome Gateway Framework, Whitehouse Street Framework, Bedminster Green Framework, and the emerging Harbour Place Shaping Strategy.
3. To note the regeneration service will be submitting a funding bid to the Combined Authority to develop a Regeneration Framework for Lawrence Hill.

The meeting was adjourned for 10 minutes at 3:25pm.

The meeting was reconvened at 3:35pm.

9 Establishment of a Local Plan Working Group

The Committee considered a report to agree the re-establishment of an informal cross-party Local Plan Working Group to operate under the auspices of the Economy and Skills Policy Committee.

Summary of main points raised/noted in discussion of this item:

- It was confirmed that the Local Plan Working Group would meet in private and would report back into the Economy and Skills Policy Committee who would have oversight of the Local Plan.
- It was noted that the timelines for the working group were still to be confirmed but officers expect that the adoption of the Local Plan would be brought to the Committee for decision in early 2025.
Action: Officers to update the Terms of Reference to note that the timelines would be subject to the conclusion of the Local Plan adoption.
- Members asked that they be informed on the progress of the Local Plan ahead of adoption.
Action: Officers to report back to the Economy & Skills Policy Committee on the progress of the Local Plan Working Group.

The Committee agreed that subject to the above actions, it was RESOLVED;

1. To endorse the establishment of an informal cross party Local Plan Working Group in principle in accordance with the terms of reference as set out in Appendix A of the report.

10 Corporate Risk Management Report - Quarter 1, 2024/25

The Committee received an update report on current significant strategic risks to achieving the Council's objectives, within the Economy and Skills Committee, as set in the Corporate Strategy 2022-2027 and summarised progress in managing the risks and actions being taken as at Quarter 1 of 2024-25.



Summary of main points raised/noted in discussion of this item:

- In response to questions about risk CRR12 (EPRT ability to prepare for and respond to emergencies / incidents could be overwhelmed), officers advised that the in house emergency response team was small, but colleagues worked with partners and emergency services to provide a consistent and resilient service.
- It was noted that there was a duty Director rota in place each week where the director on duty would be responsible for overseeing incident management.
- Members asked about the prevention of emergencies/incidents and were advised that this was challenging as they were often unpredictable and the number of incidents in Bristol were higher than average nationally.
- The Chair suggested that Committee Members visit the Operations Centre to learn more about Bristol's emergency response team.
- Members asked about the Corporate Resilience Group. **Action:** Officers to provide further information on the purpose and membership of the Corporate Resilience Group.
- In response to questions about risk CRR59 (Failure to deliver timely statutory planning decisions), officers advised that since the designation notice was served, planning colleagues had been working hard to clear the backlog of applications and currently, there was around 40 unallocated cases which was about 2 weeks' worth, but this was usual practice within the service for progressing these applications.
- It was noted that the planning fees structure that had been set nationally was frozen at a low rate which had resulted in less resource into the planning service.

The Committee RESOLVED;

1. **To note the Corporate Risk Management Report for Quarter 1, 2024/25 for the Economy & Skills Policy Committee.**

11 Finance Report Update

The Committee received an update on the Council Revenue and Capital budget for 2024/25, which was agreed by Full Council on 21 February 2024, for the Economy and Skills Committee financial forecast at Period 2, Quarter 1.

Summary of main points raised/noted in discussion of this item:

- Officers advised that the report did not include the financials for the Employment, Skills and lifelong learning but this service was largely grand funded.
- Members raised concerns around the shortfall of £60k in the Legible City contract which was due to the digital advertising screens being vandalised. Officers advised that the income generated from the screens offsets the shortfall.



- There was a discussion around the budget for flood defences. **Action:** Officers to advise on budget projections for the Harbour dredging works that would need to take place as part of the Cattle Market Road site redevelopment.

The Committee RESOLVED;

1. **To note the provisional P2 outturn position for budgets within the remit of the Economy & Skills Committee.**

Meeting ended at 4:27pm

CHAIR _____

