

# Bristol City Council

## Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

24 August 2016 at 6.00 pm



### Members Present:-

**Councillors:** Charlie Bolton, Nicola Bowden-Jones, Tom Brook, Jude English, Geoff Gollop, John Goulandris, Gill Kirk, Brenda Massey, Olly Mead, Anthony Negus and Steve Pearce

### Officers in Attendance:-

Marvin Rees (Mayor), Councillor Helen Holland (Cabinet Member for Place), Anna Klonowski (Interim Strategic Director - Business Change), Shahzia Daya (Interim Service Director - Legal and Democratic Services), Andrea Dell, Lucy Fleming (Scrutiny Co-ordinator), Lynda Bird (Programme Manager, Devolution Programme) and Chris Hackett (Economic Strategy Manager)

## 1. Welcome, Introductions and Safety Information

The emergency evacuation procedure was noted.

## 2. Apologies for absence.

There were no apologies for absence.

## 3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

## 4. Chair's Business

None.

## 5. Public Forum

There were no public forum items.

## 6. West of England Devolution



The Board considered the outcome of the public consultation process which ran from the 4th July to the 15<sup>th</sup> August. The Board considered whether it would wish to submit further comments to the Secretary of State by the deadline of the 26<sup>th</sup> August and whether there should be an Extraordinary Full Council before final consent was given by Cabinet.

During discussion the following issues were noted/raised:

- a. It was confirmed that at this point in time there was no change to the devolution deal, despite speculation in the press in relation to government policy re Metro Mayors. Each local authority would be making representations for absolute clarity.
- b. How representative was a response rate of 0.15% – it was noted that a Secretary of State consultation did not generally engender a large public response and the Council had been advised that the response rate was not out of kilter with other devolution consultations.
- c. The public response had not identified particular concerns around the proposal for a metro Mayor.
- d. One of the issues was about how the public would be engaged in devolution issues going forward – for example an engagement around what the public would like to see devolved. A factor in the response rate could also have been the timing over the summer period.
- e. The role of the Board was to review the outcome of the consultation and whether there was anything particularly different arising out of the consultation to the Council's views.
- f. It was a widely publicized consultation and 70% of respondents from Bristol were in favour of the proposals, however concerns were expressed about the response rate and whether this could realistically be taken as a representative view.
- g. The consultation report was large as the Councils needed to provide comprehensive information to the Secretary of State. Officers have been in close contact with DCLG regarding the information required in the report.
- h. Information would be provided on the exact costs of the consultation but there had been a budget of approximately £9k shared between the 3 authorities.
- i. The consultation was primarily about the process and this probably impacted on the public's level of engagement.
- j. It was the Secretary of State who would consider whether the consultation process and outcome were sufficiently robust to go forward with a decision.



k. If the public had been very opposed to the proposals this would have emerged, for example through a social media campaign.

l. The Council discussed with other authorities and the DCLG what needed to go into the consultation. The report had to cover the questions which the Secretary of State might ask.

m. Going forward the Council would take on board comments made by the Board about ways in which the public could be more involved in council decision making, including the way the Council supports members in terms of providing information for them to pass on to the public.

In conclusion the Board

**Resolved:**

- (1) To note the consultation and that there were no further comments from the Board.
- (2) That there would not need to be a further Full Council meeting on the issue.

Meeting ended at 6.54 pm

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

