

Bristol City Council

Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board



24 April 2020 at 11.30 am

Members Present:-

Councillors: Geoff Gollop (Chair), Celia Phipps (Vice-Chair), Stephen Clarke, Claire Hiscott, Paula O'Rourke, Jo Sergeant, Brenda Massey and Anthony Negus

1. Welcome, Introductions and Safety Information

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

No apologies for absence were received.

3. Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting (to follow)

The minutes of the meetings on the 2 March 2020 were approved.

RESOLVED;

That minutes of the meeting on the 2 March 2020 be approved as a correct record.

5. Chair's Business

The Chair outlined the approach for scrutiny going forward, including;

- The Mayor's Forward Plan, which is published monthly, would inform OSMB agendas.



- OSMB would receive regular up-dates on the Covid-19 response.
- All scrutiny working groups that were convened would report to OSMB.
- The People Scrutiny Commission and Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee would identify areas for further work, and make recommendations to OSMB.
- There was a need to ensure Scrutiny could continue to operate whilst acknowledging that officers and health partners must be able to continue to focus on the response to Covid-19.

6. Public Forum

The Head of Democratic Engagement summarised the current Public Forum procedural rules for virtual meetings advising that the public could submit petitions, statements and questions in the usual way, but there would not currently be the opportunity for the public to present statements or ask supplementary questions. This process would be kept under review.

The following public forum was received and a copy placed in the minute book;

Questions

Ref	Name	Agenda item
Q1	Suzanne Audrey	7. Response to COVID-19
Q2	Suzanne Audrey	8. Clean Air Zone
Q3	Alan Morris	8. Clean Air Zone
Q4	Cllr Steve Smith	7. Response to COVID-19
Q5	Cllr Clive Stevens	8. Clean Air Zone
Q6	Extinction Rebellion	8. Clean Air Zone

Statements and Petitions

Ref	Name	Agenda item
S1	David Redgewell	7. Response to COVID-19
S2	David Redgewell	8. Clean Air Zone
S3	Alan Morris - Bristol Clean Air Alliance	8. Clean Air Zone
S4	Extinction Rebellion Bristol	8. Clean Air Zone



RESOLVED;

That the public forum business be noted.

7. Response to Coronavirus / COVID-19 Pandemic

The Executive Director of Resources and Head of Paid Service thanked all council staff for their commitment and hard work around Covid-19, and stated that the response from partner organisations across the city had been very positive.

The Executive Director of Resources and Head of Paid Service commented on the financial implications of the loss of income streams and the cost of the response to the crisis. There was a need for further financial support from central government to prevent a significant impact on future service delivery.

The Director of Policy, Strategy and Partnerships spoke to the report (available in the [published pack](#)). During the ensuing discussion the following points were highlighted;

- Redeployment of Council staff had predominantly been from areas that had needed to be closed temporarily or reduced e.g. libraries and museums.
- Discussions were underway with the Gypsy and Traveller communities to ensure they could be supported during the pandemic. The Portway vehicle dwellers site was now full; 25 vehicles were on the site which was co-managed between the vehicle dwellers and the City Council. A second site was planned to open in Bamfield which would provide accommodation for up to 25 vehicles. Water, WC and washing facilities would be provided. Users of both sites would be required to sign up to site license conditions to ensure appropriate site management was maintained.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) remained a high risk area; the issue had a national profile.
- Given the present levels of supply there were sufficient amounts of PPE locally external Adult Care Providers could contact adultcommissioning@bristol.gov.uk for PPE and other commissioning requests / contracts related issues.
- Direct payment users could email WECIL on dpsupport@wecil.co.uk or call 0117 947 9933 and contact People Plus by email on ilssouthwest@peopleplus.co.uk or call 0330 123 2815 if they required support.
- Local Authorities could use the new Care Act easements, created under the Coronavirus Act 2020; this related to assessments of care and support, with the duty to meet eligible needs replaced with the power to do so. The easements were time-limited and to be used as narrowly as possible.
- There was a discussion about discharging patients from hospital to care homes; Members were advised that there were concerns about the risk of transferring Covid-19 in to care homes.
- Hospital occupancy levels had 50% bed availability. The Nightingale Hospital near Bristol meant there was also additional capacity, so whilst discharge to care homes could not be ruled out there was not such an urgent need for that now until there was full confidence that patients were clear of Covid-19.
- Members asked for clarification about any changes to decision-making and delegated powers for allocating Council finances. Officers said that everything would continue to be reported at Cabinet meetings. It was considered important to ensure central government had a clear understanding of the impact on local finance within the context of increased reliance on local income streams over the past 10 years.
- All channels available to the Council were being utilised to engage with central government to make the financial case for numerous tranches of funding.



- Members were advised that the Council had been actively reviewing its financial reserves, and modelling had taken place to ensure proper management and mitigation.
- The Chair moved that the Budget Task and Finish Group should be reconvened. All Members present agreed that the group should be re-established.
- A full debrief, review and reflection would be needed after the lockdown had been relaxed to evaluate the Council's response. The Chair stated that there was a role for scrutiny and that Members could be a catalyst in how the 'new normal' would look like after the lockdown ended.

The Chair thanked the Executive Director of Resources and Head of Paid Services for his strong leadership, and asked him to convey appreciation from all Members to all staff across the Council for their outstanding work at this difficult time.

RESOLVED;

That the Finance Task and Finish Group be reconvened. Further information would be brought to the next OSMB meeting.

8. Clean Air Zone (to follow)

Members were provided with a presentation from the Head of Strategic City Transport and Programme Coordinator (slides are in the [published pack](#)). During the ensuing discussion the following points were discussed;

- An Outline Business Case had been submitted to Government in November 2019; however a response had been delayed by the planned general election.
- There had been an expectation that Bristol's compliance year would come forward; OSMB Members were advised that it was originally anticipated that compliance would be 2024, and additional modelling showed this had come forward to 2023.
- The Government's Joint Air Quality Unit (JAQU) has not indicated any change to the approach due to Covid-19.
- The modelling process utilised was recommended by JAQU.
- It had been calculated that all schemes would result in fewer car trips overall; the CAZ D had a 'sloping impact' as people would change their vehicles over time; the diesel ban would have an immediate impact due to the cut-off point at date of implementation.
- There was a discussion about levels of traffic displacement outside of the proposed diesel ban area. Members were advised that further information could be requested but it was anticipated this would show an overall average reduction with small peaks.
- It was confirmed that CAZ D was not a congestion charge, as it only charged specified polluting vehicles.
- Members were advised that people were already making vehicle purchasing decisions which took into account an upcoming scheme, and greater clarity could increase that trend.
- Motorway closures would have an impact on air quality; modelling this was difficult.
- Members were advised that the focus on legal compliance within a specified framework by the government meant there was a narrow methodology officers had to use; and this would not provide scope to take some other factors into account.



RESOLVED;

That that update be noted.

That Members are concerned that no consideration has been given to the “overspill” impact on wards neighbouring the Clean Air Zone, or on those wards affected by the main routes into the city centre.

That a full presentation be made to OSMB on the impact on the City as a whole of the final proposals, before the Full Business Case is submitted.

That the Overview & Scrutiny Management Board present a statement to Cabinet setting out its views.

9. Mayor's Forward Plan - Standing Item (to follow)

The following points were made;

- Workforce for the Future Item: It was reported that the related WECA funding bid is intended to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Increasing levels of apprenticeships which would help grow SMEs was thought to be crucial within the context of recovery after Covid-19.

Councillor O'Rourke left the meeting at 1:35pm.

- A more robust system for apprenticeship recruitment had been assured; some were delayed due to Covid-19 and so there was discussion with government to extend the use of the levy, as it was time-limited.
- The Management Board was advised that officers were looking at the overall talent management strategy including career development.
- The previous chief executive of Bristol Energy stepped down and an Interim manager had been in post for 3 weeks. Bristol Energy would be brought to OSMB at a future meeting (likely to be May/June).

RESOLVED;

The Mayor's Forward Plan be noted.

10. Minutes from the WECA Overview and Scrutiny Committee - For information (standing item)

The minutes WECA on 2 October 2019 and the 29 January 2020 were noted.

RESOLVED;

That the WECA minutes 2 October 2019 and 29 January 2020 be noted.



Meeting ended at 1.40 pm

