

**Bristol City Council
Minutes of the Communities Scrutiny Commission**

8 February 2021 at 2.00 pm



Members Present:-

Councillors: Anthony Negus (Chair), Jo Sergeant (Vice-Chair), Donald Alexander, Barry Clark, Carla Denyer, Martin Fodor, Margaret Hickman, Matt Melias and Graham Morris

1. Welcome, Introductions and Safety Information

The Chair welcomed the attendees. The meeting was conducted via video conference.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Wellington; Councillor Phipps attended as a delegate.

3. Declarations of Interest

No declarations were received.

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

An amendment was noted for the minutes of 7th December 2020 on page 8 where a request was made for additional information regarding heat pumps and long term cost. It was agreed this would be highlighted and added to the Action Tracker.

The minutes were otherwise approved as an accurate record.

RESOLVED; That the identified corrections to the Minutes of 7th December 2020 be made, at which point the Minutes be considered approved.



5. Action Tracker

The Minutes and Action Tracker noted that there was an expectation that the Ecological Emergency paper would be available for Scrutiny by March 2021. It was clarified that this was the anticipated timeline only and would be available at a later date. The Chair agreed to write to the Cabinet Member with responsibility for the Climate Emergency to clarify the details.

Further information around the Bristol Impact Fund was received. The Chair observed that one of the intended aims was noted as using simpler language, but felt this had not been achieved in the submitted papers.

RESOLVED; That the Chair of the Communities Scrutiny Commission write to the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Climate Emergency to clarify details of input around the Ecological Emergency paper.

6. Chair's Business

The Chair noted that one of the written responses to a Public Forum question suggested that a Freedom of Information Act request would be required, and queried why this would be necessary.

RESOLVED; That Officers clarify why it would be necessary to address a Public Forum question regarding Enforcement through the Freedom of Information Act.

7. Public Forum

Public Forum questions and statements were published prior to the meeting and can be viewed [here](#).

- Andrew Waller submitted four Public Forum questions and received written responses, and spoke to a submitted Public Forum statement regarding enforcement around noise complaints.
- David Redgewell spoke to a submitted Public Forum statement regarding Community Toilets and graffiti removal.
- The Chair suggested that questions raised within Public Forum statements should be referred to the appropriate officers for comment and response.

RESOLVED; That questions raised within the Public Forum statements be referred to relevant Officers for a response; and

That the Public Forum be noted.

8. Waste: Themes of a new strategy



The Waste Strategic Client Manager delivered the presentation on themes to be included in a future planned Waste Strategy for Bristol. Key points raised included:

- Officers emphasised that reducing waste was a key mechanism for reducing carbon. Targets included the aim to reduce waste to below 150kg per person per year. This was a challenge in any circumstance, and the impact of Covid-19 had meant that residual waste increased.
- A number of themes for the Waste Strategy were outlined. Priorities included improving civic pride within communities and improving enforcement powers by linking through different organisations (for example, Universities and student groups).
- A key take-away for a future strategy was that a single approach would not be appropriate for all the needs across Bristol. A 'village' effect (which refers to a place-based workforce approach) was being explored.
- A process diagram on fly tipping was provided.

Commission Members commented and raised questions regarding the report.

- The Chair noted that the issue of waste management and the development of a strategy had been an area of interest for the Commission, with the possibility of an Inquiry Day previously raised, and agreed to send notes of Commission lead discussions to Officers for reference. Further consideration of a Waste Inquiry Day as part of future work programming was agreed.
- Bristol performed well against core cities for recycling, and Officers believed this was due to the city making some difficult decisions at an early stage, including early introduction of fortnightly collections.
- Members made a number of suggestions for future consideration, which Officers noted. These included:
 - a communication campaign around addressing dog waste mess.
 - laundry schemes for reusable nappies and consideration of nappy recycling.
 - joined up working between Waste and Parks departments to address waste clearance holistically.
 - joined up working between the Travel and Waste departments as part of Livable Neighbourhoods strategies to address collection on streets.
 - engaging with local groups and community involvement. The Chair was aware of some groups to draw to Officers' attention.
- It was noted that recycling was more difficult to extract from flats and high rise blocks. This was planned to be addressed through Planning mechanisms.



- Members were aware of missed collections of food waste, which Officers encouraged residents to report. A new reporting mechanism was introduced in October 2020 but it had been found that this was not user friendly. Officers were examining improvements for this.
- Members queried the methodology for achieving targets, particularly around partnership working. Officers emphasised that this was key to any waste strategy.
- Members suggested working with other local authorities to develop an infrastructure to address plastics disposal. Some conversations were taking place with Mayoral involvement although procurement of a consortium initiative would be likely to take some time.
- Members suggested working with businesses to address packaging waste. It was anticipated that future initiatives from Central Government would have an impact on this area
- Electronic waste was raised and confirmed that disposal would form part of the strategy.
- Members queried the progress in eliminating plastic. Following the decision to undertake this work in 2020 a group action plan was created but progress stalled following Covid-19. There was a plan in place to continue this once there was capacity to do so.

RESOLVED; That notes of discussions held between the Commission leads would be sent to Officers for reference; and

That further consideration of a Waste Inquiry Day be raised as part of future work programming for the 2021/22 year; and

That Officers note the issues raised by Members for consideration as part of a new Waste Strategy.

9. Future Parks

The Head of Service - Natural & Marine Environment, and Future Parks Programme Manager delivered a presentation on the progress of the Future Parks Project.

- This project aimed to ensure the sustainability of Bristol Parks in the years to come with the development of a 25 year strategy. Data analysis had found that Parks brought a £300million per annum benefit. Partnership working across sectors was in place, and a volunteer database had been developed. A diagram showing the relationship between Parks and stakeholders was provided.
- Covid-19 had impacted the progress of the project and amendments were being discussed with the funding partners.
- It was noted that some workstreams previously raised (e.g. Environment and Workforce Change) had been removed as they would form business as usual within existing teams.
- It was confirmed that the Clifton Downs were out of scope for the project as council owned sites were being prioritised.



- Volunteering would feature as part of this project, and this had been encouraged by the funding partners. Volunteering opportunities were to be advertised once the expression of interest stage was reached.
- Members queried local and community input around expressions of interest. The aim was to be clear around evaluation criteria in advance, and significant input from anchor organisations was planned following the approval of the mid-point review.
- The deliverability of proposals was queried. Small scale trials were expected to explore this in order to manage expectations and learn lessons along the way.
- 'Free at point of entry' was clarified; all Parks would remain free to access but particular events or activities within the parks may have a cost associated.
- 13 sites had been identified across the city, with a further 14 to identified through conversations with anchor organisations. It was confirmed that these were located across the city and data (including the Quality of Life survey) had been used to ensure equality of opportunity. Officers agreed to provide a list of identified sites.
- A concern over future funding was raised. A piece of work was taking place around establishing the exact level of investment required. This had not yet concluded.
- The application for the £900k grant was considered by Members. This demonstrated that 25% cost was for consultants, and that no contingency or income was shown. Officers clarified that the funding would not permit a contingency fund; this type of project is the first of its kind conducted by funding partners. The funding match was to be through Officer resource / time.
- Members requested details of what a 'gold standard' of Park would look like. The Green Flag standard was a national benchmark which had been used.
- Addressing health inequalities featured as a significant part of the project with work being conducted with Public Health.
- Members noted that brochure and mapping had been anticipated in February 2021, but this was not available at the time.
- A concern was raised over the use of the phrase 'our approach is to reposition the Parks service politically and societally.'

RESOLVED; That Officers provide the list of identified Future Park sites; and

That Officers note the comments of the Communities Scrutiny Commission.

1C Estate Safety

The Project Manager in Estate Management presented the report on the work of the Estate Safety Working Group which had aimed to improve the look and feel around low and high rise blocks in Bristol.



- The group had highlighted quick wins (such as graffiti removal), as well as engaged with partnership working. The work was due to continue with a visit to Tower Hamlets, but the group was put on hold following the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Lessons learned were to be used to inform the future approach, with the work conducted being moved under Estate Services.
- Key improvements made included increasing the visibility of Housing Officers on individual estates to improve relationships with residents and general understanding of reporting routes, and introducing action plans for improvements in individual blocks.
- Members were supportive of this work, and welcomed the Head of Housing Management as relatively new in post.
- A Member noted a poor experience in the past after working with a resident experiencing hate crime in which it was felt the Housing Officer was not sufficiently exploring options to address the problem. The Head of Housing Management acknowledged this and emphasised the commitment to listen and engage further with residents, with an invitation to contact should any members encounter a similar situation.
- A Member noted from a previous conversation with a Housing Officer within their ward that they felt optimistic about the involvement of the new Head of Housing Management, and welcomed her involvement.
- Members encouraged Officers to continue to seek engagement with residents and staff to identify common or recurring issues.

RESOLVED; That Officers note the comments of the Communities Scrutiny Commission.

11 Community Safety Partnership Needs Analysis Update

The Safer Communities Manager presented an update on the progress of a Needs Analysis conducted by the BCC Keeping Communities Safe Team to inform the strategic priorities of the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership. Members were invited to raise questions or comment on the report.

- Members queried how the analysis would consider older data as current issues may have been exacerbated by Covid-19, such as Domestic Abuse. It was confirmed that comparisons would take place against data from previous years, and contextual analysis would provide a narrative for this. Consultations with Public Health experts were planned.
- Members asked whether the same issues were being noted over a number of years. While analysis was ongoing, similar themes to previous years were expected to emerge, although this was also in line with national trends and in comparison to core cities.
- It was agreed that Officers would circulate the finalised Needs Analysis for information once complete.
- Members stated that greater consideration of strengthening communities may be beneficial.
- A separate Hate Crime needs was also being conducted to be fed into the overall assessment. This related to the previous discussion with Estate Security officers.
- Members raised that the People Scrutiny Commission would also benefit from seeing the finalised report.



RESOLVED; That Officers would circulate the finalised Needs Analysis assessment for information once complete; and

That Officers note the comments of the Communities Scrutiny Commission.

12 Corporate Risk Register Q3

The Risk Register was noted for information. The information available in the Risk Register had been raised in OSMB Leads meetings.

13 Work Programme

The Work Programme was noted for information. The meeting was the last Commission meeting of the municipal year.

Commission Members made suggestions for items to be considered for a future work programme, including:

- Enforcement (particularly around the powers held by the Neighbourhood Enforcement Team)
- Allotment Strategy
- Commercialisation Strategy
- Partnership working as a generic issue
- A continued discussion around Waste Management, potentially involving a Review or Inquiry Day.

RESOLVED; That the Chair produce a summary of the considerations of the Communities Scrutiny Commission during the 2020/21 year to be raised through Scrutiny.

