

## OSMB Referral to Cabinet 6<sup>th</sup> December 22

At a meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> December 22, the Overview and Scrutiny Management considered a report on the City Leap Energy partnership (agenda item 7).

OSMB Members are broadly supportive of the proposals in relation to City Leap and recognise the potential benefits to the city and its residents in delivering decarbonisation. However, in view of the complexity of the scheme and the associated investment they asked that Cabinet take the following points into consideration as plans progress:

- The risk register in relation to City Leap was exempt from publication. Consideration should be given to making a public version of the document available to improve transparency.
- It was important to put in adequate safeguards to ensure that future energy customers were protected against issues with supply, cost and infrastructure repairs etc. It was noted that heat services were not currently regulated by the government but that was expected to change in the future.
- The plans to capture additional sources of heat e.g., including those from waste and combustion were noted. Some members expressed concern that waste reduction goals should not be compromised to provide a source of energy.
- Political accountability must be retained throughout the City Leap project, especially considering the change to the Council's governance in 2024.
- The decision to appoint a Bristol City Council officer as one of the Directors of the City Leap Partnership needed to be carefully thought through in case there were conflicts of interest. It was suggested that this role be undertaken by an elected member rather than an officer as was the case for some other Council businesses.
- Information about the job opportunities arising from City Leap needed more clarification - it was unclear how many FTEs would be created, what roles would be included and where the jobs would be located.
- The Council would retain a 'golden or special share' in City Leap until additional regulations were in place to manage arrangements. Some Members would like to see more details about the proposed agreement and consideration given by Cabinet regarding whether such a share ought to be retained as a guarantee for the city for the duration of the agreement but qualified to not disadvantage our strategic partner.
- Considerable funding had been spent to date on legal and accountancy fees, which was a concern.
- Further details about the financial aspects of the project would be helpful, including the impact of inflation, an assessment of the Council's investments to date, and how the losses for Bristol Heat Networks had been covered.
- The plans to enable all residents to access affordable energy savings measures more easily in the future was welcomed. It would be beneficial for residents who were able to afford to make their own adaptations to obtain support to achieve this via the Council purchasing items in bulk at reduced cost.
- In the past, schemes to provide home adaptations had been impacted by the absence of suitable local tradespeople and skills. It was noted that plans were in place to meet demand in the future by recruitment and training.
- It was important to ensure robust processes were in place to select which schools and public buildings were upgraded as part of City Leap.
- Members asked about procurement as the JV entities would not be governed by public law. OSMB supported rigorous KPIs to ensure local jobs, skills and suppliers were advantaged.