



Strategy and Resources Meeting

Tuesday 11th July 2023

The Trinity Centre

7:00pm

Present:

Cllrs Ward (Chairman), Cairns, Cooper, Parkin, Puri and Raut.

In Attendance:

Olive O'Sullivan – Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Mary Watkins – Head of Finance.

There were three members of the public present.

The Deputy Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and opened public question time.

Jack Moffat asked if Committee was aware of the views of Mary Portas, on the subject of Town Centre Development, from the recent event organised by the Business Improvement District (BID) that took place at Sutton College and if they would be discussed in relation to the Town Centre regeneration.

The CEO responded that the Town Council's Regeneration Programme Director had attended the session and provided feedback. Mary Portas had spoken about the changing nature of high streets and the need for a new vision. The CEO advised that the future for high streets described by Mary Portas is set out in the Masterplan for the Town Centre, which is mixed use, retail, residential and leisure. In response to a question asking if the Town Council would be giving a stronger role to the College in the regeneration of the Town Centre, the CEO replied that the Town Council had been working closely with the College, offering student placements for the past few years and that the TCRP would look to involve the college in the proposed Economic and Enterprise Task Group.

16 Apologies for Absence

The CEO had received apologies from Cllrs Mackey and Pears. Cllr Ward had sent apologies for lateness.

Resolved to accept the apologies received.

17 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

18 Exclusion of the Press and Public

This Motion was not taken as there were no discussions under Agenda Item 31.

At 7:11pm – Cllr Ward entered the meeting and took the Chair.

19 Minutes of the Previous Meetings



Resolved to confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 20th June 2023.

20 Human Resources Sub Committee Meeting

Resolved to note the minutes of the meeting of the Human Resources Sub Committee held on 25th April 2023.

21 Update from the Human Resources Sub Committee

The CEO reported that interviews had taken place for the role of Head of Project Delivery and Assistant CEO and that a preferred candidate had been identified.

22 Matters Arising

The CEO reported that the plans for town centre environmental improvements were progressing, and discussions had taken place with local organisations on the delivery of the proposed improvements.

The landlord of the Town Council offices has acknowledged the request for health and safety documentation, we will continue to chase.

23 Questions from Members

No questions had been submitted.

25 Sutton Coldfield Library's Archives and Local Studies Collection

The CEO presented the proposal to fund an experienced archivist from Birmingham City Council (BCC) to work two days a week on the tasks outlined in the report. There were 40 recommendations in the report presented to Council in September 2022, these tasks can be split into tasks for; an archivist to complete, the library staff to complete and key decisions still be made on the future of the archive. Approval of the proposal would allow progress on most of the tasks and work on the bigger strategic recommendations would continue in the background.

Cllr Cooper raised concerns over the conditions in which the Archives are currently stored and asked if it would be better to appoint an archivist to work full time over a shorter period to protect the material.

In response to a question from Cllr Parkin, the CEO advised that work should commence after the Town Council approved the funding.

Cllr Cairns and Ward spoke in support of the proposal.

Resolved to recommend to Full Council approval of a funding allocation of £38,315 from the Archives and Local Collections Earmarked Reserve to progress work towards the delivery of the recommendations set out in the Archive Skills Consultancy Report on the Sutton Coldfield Archive & Local Studies Collection.

Resolved that the CEO be delegated to continue discussions with Birmingham City Council on the future of the Archive & Local Studies Collection and delivery of the recommendations set out in and Archive Skills Consultancy Report.

24 Devolution Deal with Birmingham City Council



Cllr Ward reported that the Devo Deal Working Group had met a number of times with the CEO and Andrew Tucker, to work up the draft Devo Deal proposal presented to Committee.

In response to a question from Cllr Cooper, the CEO confirmed that the remaining items that the Devo Deal Working Group had listed as a high priority for asset transfer would form part of future discussions.

Cllr Cooper asked about two areas in Minworth that had not been included. The CEO advised that these areas were designated development land, and that Birmingham City Council was not likely to transfer them, but they are included in the list for future discussions.

Cllr Parkin spoke in support of the items listed on the Devo Deal proposal and said there would be further opportunities in the future to develop the list.

Cllr Cairns also spoke in support of the proposal that provided a smaller list of assets that would allow a staged approach to asset transfers.

In response to a question from Cllr Cooper regarding why Sutton Park had not been included on the list, Cllr Ward responded that this proposal was a package of more straightforward assets for transfer and the future governance arrangements of Sutton Park would be the number one agenda item at his meeting with the leader of Birmingham City Council next week.

Cllr Puri said the Devolution Deal proposal was about creating a framework and that the details relating to finances, resources etc. could be applied to a small number of assets before expanding further.

Parkin asked about the options detailed in section six of the report and asked if option 3 – Delegation of service delivery was acceptable as an option. Cllr Ward responded that it is not the preferred option but should be included. Cllr Puri noted that it may be appropriate for some locations.

Resolved to approve the Devo-Deal Proposal set out in the report for discussion with the City Council as a basis for seeking more effective and efficient devolution of assets and services in line with the principles within the White Paper 'Working Together in Birmingham's Neighbourhoods published in January 2019.

26 Performance to Date

The CEO recommended some virements from the Budget Contingency to the below budgets:

- £4,000 to Subscriptions/Memberships
Due to a new contract for Health and Safety advice
- £6,000 to PR and Marketing
To fund a twice-yearly postal newsletter
- £8,000 to IT Equipment and Line Rental
Due to a new IT contract with Hubtel
- £6,000 to Recruitment Expenses
Recruitment of posts following a staffing structure review.

In addition, The CEO advised that in March, Council agreed a financial contribution of £110,000 to Compass Support over five years, to support operational costs at Falcon Lodge and asked Committee to consider making an allocation from the General Reserve to an Earmarked Reserve for this purpose.



In response to a question from Cllr Parkin, Cllr Ward confirmed that the Devolution Deal Earmarked Reserve could be reviewed by Committee at a future date.

Resolved to approve the virements as outlined above and that £110,000 from the general reserve be placed in an earmarked reserve for the five-year grant to Compass Support approved by Full Council in March 2023.

27 Reserves Policy

Resolved to approve the Reserves Policy.

28 Bank Account Authorised Signatories

Resolved to approve that Cllrs Allan, Griffin, Mackey, Pears, Puri, Raut and S Ward be authorised signatories for the Council.

29 Bank Reconciliations

Resolved to note the bank reconciliations from June 2023.

30 Date of the Next Meeting

19th September 2023 at the Trinity Centre.

31 Exclusion of the Press and Public

a) Human Resources Recruitment Update

This item was not discussed.

The meeting ended at 7:50pm.

Signed as a true record

19th Sept 2023