

BRISTOL ONE CITY

Economy and Skills Board

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| Date/time | 25/10/2023, 8:45 – 11:00 |
| Location | City Hall |
| Co-chairs | Victoria Matthews (Business West) Cllr Craig Cheney (Bristol City Council) |
| Attendees | Adam Rainey (Lloyds Banking Group) Anesa Kritah (Head of Economic Development, Bristol City Council) Carly Heath (Bristol City Council) Diane Bunyan (delegate for Sue Cohen, Bristol Women’s Commission) Ines Lage (Trade Union Congress) Jane Taylor (Bristol City Council) Joe Hensey (upReach) Kathryn Davis (Visit West) Paul Bennett (UWE) |
| Apologies | Alex Hearn (Bristol City Council) Barra MacRuairi (UoB) Danny Cox (Hargreaves Lansdown) Dominic Ellison (WECIL) Donna Speed (We the Curious) Nick Lee (Parragon Costs Solutions) Poku Osei (Babbasa) Sado Jirde (Black South West Network (BSWN)) Sam Holliday (Federation of Small Businesses) |
| Presenters & Observers | Alex Minshull (BCC – Climate Change), Deborah Brown (BCC – Early Years), Karen Blong (City Office), Naomi Lynch (Board Support), Naomi Miller (Bristol Ideas), Nina Skubala (City Office) |
| ITEMS | |
| 1) Welcome & Introductions | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VM welcomed the board and noted that it had been nearly a year since it last met • Board members introduced themselves | |
| 2) Update from Mayor | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor Marvin Rees joined briefly to endorse the leadership offered by One City Boards in the city and encouraged the board to feel empowered to take action | |

- Explained that the Economy and Skills Board (ESB) is not only about looking to support specific businesses or sectors but about creating the conditions for a thriving economy – and this might mean working in a cross-cutting way with priorities in housing, transport, childcare etc.
- Highlighted the upcoming change in political model (i.e., move from Mayoral system to committee system in May) and the need to think about the resilience of the One City Partnership and boards going forward.
- Importance of working across boards and sharing actions/insights following each meeting – opportunity for chairs to do this through Multi-board forum (Co-Chairs from each Board, Board Support Officers and the City Office team). ESB could also look at the timelines of other boards and their goals, as well as think about facilitating joint board workshops.

3) City Challenges: Economic Insights

- Economic bulletin shared in advance of the meeting – though worth noting that more recent data has shown a dip in employment levels, meaning Bristol’s employment levels have fallen behind the South West.
- Significant proportion of our workforce rely on low-pay and insecure work, this is a concern going forward
- [Real Living Wage was updated yesterday to £12](#) (24th October) – while this is good to see we also need to think about the additional burden this might place on SMEs who are wanting to be accredited as it pushes up their costs at a time when budgets are already tight
- We are seeing a big shortfall in workforce for particular sectors – especially in health and hospitality
- Footfall is quite strong in Bristol city centre (Broadmead and St Nicks) – we are thinking about how we use the city centre differently (e.g., free events, vacant property use)
- Night time economy is struggling nationally – there is a campaign to reduce VAT rate to 12.5%. Operational costs are up by 40% (many still repaying bounceback loans)
- Visit West – in terms of hotel occupancy we are ahead of last year, and also ahead of the regional average. 2022 visitor economy back up to £1bn (7% back), expecting 2023 to be record numbers – down to great hospitality and cultural offer

4) Goals Updates

Goal 40:

The city is supporting Bristol’s early years and childcare sector by ensuring any national government legislation changes are most effectively benefitting Bristol

- Slides provided update on current and future offer from government around provision and what this will mean locally
- Free hours not available/eligible for night-time provision, disadvantaging the 40+% of our workforce who work between 6pm-6am
- Free hours can only be claimed via Ofsted registered providers – nannies and in-home childminders not eligible (though childminders working from their own home can be)

- There is sufficiency within the city at a city-level, though the picture of provision looks different across the city. This doesn't mean that you will get the level of provision that you want/where you want it
- Struggles around recruitment and retention – low pay an issue.
- Government will be running a campaign in December

ASKS:

- Board members to share with families that free childcare is expanding
- Board members to promote supportive government schemes for chargeable parts of childcare (e.g., tax free childcare, childcare element of UC)
- Board members to promote working in childcare as a career in our city and help us develop talents of citizens
- Board members to assist in networking with the OCP 50 organisations, to promote the expansion
- Early years to provide a toolkit that employers can share with employees about what they're entitled to/provision in the city
- Ask for further support re having return to work conversations – what can we do to let businesses know/support them to do this?

Goal 41: [A major events and festival programme](#) celebrating the 650th anniversary of Bristol becoming a city is part of a refreshed campaign (including the Bristol Homecoming Campaign) to increase sustainable tourism, in line with the findings from the International Year of Sustainable Tourism 2017

- Time-limited goal for 2023
- Goal was defined in 2019/19 – pre-covid. Delivering against this in the context of Covid has been a challenge
- Facilitated a year long festival that encouraged people to (re)discover the history of Bristol and its people
- Future ambitions - this type of year long festival/programme can have a big impact on the city - if we are thinking about City of Culture for 2029 we need to take this seriously and be clear about our intention and commitment

Goal 42: There is an ongoing upward trend in employment opportunities for young people, care leavers, older people and adults with learning difficulties and disabilities through local coordination and support for appropriate paid work experience and trainee / apprenticeship programmes

- Recent data from Institute for Employment suggests that there will be 3.4 million fewer people in work by 2040 – within that number they are anticipating an increase in the need for young people in the workforce and significant increase in proportion of 65+ in the workforce
- There will be less jobs
- Concerns about succession planning in some sectors across Bristol (e.g., construction, technical skills, public sectors roles – i.e., health and social care, education)

- Apprenticeships levy has declined in take-up since the move to employer led rather than provider-led, with more people who are already in employment using the levy for higher apprenticeships rather than lower/entry level
- Care leavers – [Reboot West delivered by 1625 Independent](#) provides a mix of support for young people who have been through trauma. This is specialist work. There is a need for employers to be more trauma-informed. Although Bristol is achieving higher rates of EET amongst care leavers than the English average, only 55% of 19-21 year olds are in Education, Training and Employment.
- Learning Difficulties & Autism - [WeWork For Everyone](#) programme in Bristol supports young people with learning difficulties and autism through a holistic support offer. Although this programme has reached 606 Bristol residents and 95 have achieved employment, the Bristol employment rate for people with learning difficulties supported by adult social care is only 4.4%.

There is a real need for more employers to achieve diverse recruitment so that more people from these priority groups can benefit from paid employment.

ASKS:

- Can we utilise the WECA Good Employment Charter and pull together positive case studies where employers in Bristol have taken positive action to achieve greater equity, diversity and inclusion across their workforce?
- Can we hold an evening event where we share and celebrate this best practice – hearing from employers and employees – with the aim of motivating and supporting other employers to do the same.

Goal 59: Following work in 2023, Bristol’s skills provision reflects our economy’s required skills (eg. jobs which address the climate and ecological emergencies) and builds career opportunities for those traditionally underserved and/or living in our most deprived communities.

- BCC have submitted a bid to Innovate UK as part of the [Net Zero Pathfinder Programme](#) for an Innovator Project
 - This will be about aligning skills needs with future city needs around green jobs
 - Important to consider, and stitch together, the three components of: demand, supply, money. If one is missing this disrupts the flow of the others (e.g., lack of supply of workers when the money and demand is there)
 - BCC have mapped out current provision around skills and identified gaps that need to be filled by working with supply chains. This work will build on two recent inclusive career pathway programmes that have been delivered (one with health and social care, another with parks and green spaces)
 - The programme would engage 4 neighbourhoods where there are barriers to employment. It would involve building up an understanding of what jobs there are in retrofit, what training is in place and what more is needed – identifying a pathway for those communities based on their needs
 - BCC would work with businesses, schools communities and providers and provide incentives to potential recruits to support them to engage

- 1 in 4 chance for this application, up against others including Manchester. If unsuccessful, BCC will come back to the ESB to think through an alternative approach which would require a patchwork of funding

Goal 60: Provide increased business start-up and scale up spaces with strong digital access to grow industry clusters and broaden entrepreneurship participation, particularly among underrepresented groups and sectors impacted by the pandemic and/or Brexit e.g. the care sector and hospitality

- BCC have launched a new inclusive and sustainable enterprise and business support service
 - contract placed with TTKO Ltd on 1st August and service is now live
 - all SMEs and residents within Bristol LA area are eligible
 - target – wards that include 20% most deprived LSOAs and underrepresented groups
- City Centre and high streets
 - 997 businesses engaged, 442 of these provided with support
 - Supporting 104 new and expanding small businesses and community organisations, allocating £901,000 in capital grants (Vacant property scheme)
 - Bristol Sparks – re-purposing vacant Marks & Spencer site in Broadmead
- Enterprise and Skills Co-Location Hub
 - Working in partnership with community growers and SME networks to deliver a food and hospitality support hub at St Nicholas’ market
 - Improving the space within the covered market to make it a destination
 - Supporting people to train and upskill ready for employment and progression in the food and hospitality sector
 - Supporting food sector businesses to start, grow and employ apprentices
 - Looking at the feasibility of a local produce cooperative trading from the new retail area at the market

ASKS:

- How do we communicate all that is happening? One City to share and promote work that is happening
- Board to attend/promote the [Living Wage Event on 9th November](#)

5) Priorities and Task & Finish Groups

- **City Gathering – 24th November**
 - Board asked to [complete poll to select and put forward a priority goal](#) for the next year
- **Task & Finish Groups**
 - All Task & Finish Groups for the ESB have now finished
 - At December meeting we will pick up discussion around whether there is a need for any new T&F Groups
- **Future Agendas**
 - Request for an item on AI at an upcoming ESB meeting

- Other items that might be useful to cover include: *Autumn statement, policy/horizon scanning, updates on bids (green skills/retrofit), Western Gateway, WECA regional strategy, social mobility strategy (UOB/UWE),*

6) AOB

- Nina Skubala gave an overview of the City Office and updated on a number of new starters. All boards have now met and the next City Gathering will take place on the 24 November.
- Other upcoming events include:
 - [Bristol Living Wage City Celebration Tickets, Thu 9 Nov 2023 at 14:00 | Eventbrite](#)
 - [OurCity2030 Employers' Forum Tickets, Wed 1 Nov 2023 at 17:15 | Eventbrite](#)

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