



Stronger City Economy Scrutiny Panel

26 September 2017

Time 6.00 pm **Public Meeting?** YES **Type of meeting** Scrutiny

Venue Bilston Library and Gallery, Mount Pleasant, Bilston WV14 7LU

Membership

Chair Cllr Jacqueline Sweetman (Lab)
Vice-chair Cllr Jonathan Yardley (Con)

Labour

Cllr Harman Banger
Cllr Philip Bateman MBE
Cllr Payal Bedi-Chadha
Cllr Paula Brookfield
Cllr Val Evans
Cllr Welcome Koussoukama
Cllr Tersaim Singh
Cllr Martin Waite
Cllr Daniel Warren

Conservative

Cllr Udey Singh

Quorum for this meeting is 3 Councillors.

Information for the Public

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact the Democratic Services team:

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Agenda

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

<i>Item No.</i>	<i>Title</i>
1	Apologies
2	Declarations of interest
3	Minutes of previous meeting (Pages 3 - 6)
4	Matters arising

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- | | |
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| 5 | Bilston - Local Economic Development and Growth (Pages 7 - 16)
Within the context set out in the report, to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How can the Council help to support the development and strengthening of the local economy in Bilston?• What else should be done?• Who are the key partners, what is their role and how can they contribute? |
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Stronger City Economy Scrutiny Panel

Agenda Item No: 3

Minutes - 20 June 2017

Attendance

Members of the Stronger City Economy Scrutiny Panel

Cllr Herman Banger
Cllr Paula Brookfield
Cllr Val Evans
Cllr Welcome Koussoukama
Cllr Tersaim Singh
Cllr Udey Singh
Cllr Jacqueline Sweetman (Chair)
Cllr Martin Waite
Cllr Daniel Warren
Cllr Jonathan Yardley (Vice-Chair)

Witnesses

Paul Birch

Revolver Records

Employees

Keren Jones
Charlotte Johns
Mark Blackstock
Heather Clark
Ricardo Almeida
Neil White
Donna Cope

Service Director - City Economy
Head of Strategic Programmes
Head of Visitor Economy
Service Development Manager
Work Experience, Place
Scrutiny Officer
Democratic Services Officer

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

1 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillor Philip Bateman and Councillor Payal Bedi-Chadha.

2 **Declarations of interest**

The Chair informed the panel she has known Paul Birch, Chief Executive, Revolver Records, for several years and they have worked together in the past.

3 **Minutes of previous meeting**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair as a correct record of the meeting.

4 **Matters arising**

The Chair requested an update on the following items:

- Consultation on the draft Library strategy
- Smart City concept

Charlotte Johns, Head of Strategic Programmes, advised that the library consultation will be considered by Cabinet in July 2017 and the Smart City concept would be considered as part of the presentation.

5 **Developing a creative, cultural and visitor economic strategy**

Charlotte Johns, Head of Strategic Programmes, introduced the work on developing the Council's strategy and vision for a creative, cultural and visitor economy that was highlighted in the report.

The Head of Strategic Programmes advised that the strategy was being drawn up to bring all the work together that was going on in the city.

The Head of Strategic Programmes played two videos to highlight this work on:

1. the work of Tech City UK, a Government-backed organisation designed to accelerate the growth of London and the UK's digital economy, and
2. Gen-Y-City, a European initiative that the Council is part of, allowing groups to share ideas internationally.

The Panel welcomed the findings that Wolverhampton has a higher proportion of micro businesses in the culture and creative industries than the national average and questioned how this can be sustained and developed.

Keren Jones, Service Director – City Economy advised that this was being worked on and would be part of the strategy as it was developed.

The Panel commented that London was so successful, with lots of clusters of networks that work together in the cultural sectors and that it was important for a network to make connections.

The Service Director – City Economy, informed the panel that her team are still working on networking issues and stressed more space is needed to facilitate this as meeting space is crucial, as is making technology more affordable and accessible.

The panel considered that its multi-cultural nature was one of its strengths which had been shown by how diverse the Sikh festival of Vaisakhi had become over recent years. It would be good to organise a Camden type market in Wolverhampton but it would need to be advertised widely.

Mark Blackstock, Head of Visitor Economy, advised the panel that poster boards have been introduced around the city which appear successful but there was still a need to broaden the understanding of these events.

Following a question about the future of the Lichfield Street development the Service Director – City Economy advised that was being led by the University.

Following a question why Wightwick Manor wasn't included in the list of cultural venues in Wolverhampton, the Head of Visitor Economy advised that the authority is currently trying to build a better relationship with Wightwick Manor and Moseley Old Hall.

The Chair welcomed Paul Birch, the creator and Chief Executive of Revolver Records to the meeting and asked for his views on how the council could help these sectors.

Paul Birch congratulated the Council for running the most successful Civic Hall in the country. He highlighted the importance of allowing clusters of businesses to develop naturally rather than creating artificial ones which were likely to be much less successful. An example of this was Jaguar Land Rover and its associated supply chain with its ability to attract inward investment. He suggested the Chubb building would be as a good place to provide office space as a start for a cluster.

Paul Birch recommended that the Council should follow the approach that Birmingham followed 20 years ago, when it only had a Holiday Inn. The council opened a Hyatt under licence and it was the catalyst that brought growth to the city. An opportunity existed in Wolverhampton if the Council were to do the same through transforming the Magistrates Court building into a hotel.

Paul mentioned Cannes MIPIM event as an international investment opportunity and the Service Director – City Economy, confirmed that the Council had attended the last two years as an opportunity to raise the City's profile and attract inward investment.

The Service Director – City Economy acknowledged that Paul's words had emphasised the importance of getting the West Side development right.

Paul Birch commented on the number of media and cultural students that were leaving the University each year but were not remaining in Wolverhampton. The Council should encourage them to remain in the city and work together in co-ops.

The panel noted that would be also be worthwhile for IT students and could be used to showcase talent in the city. Paul Birch advised that he would be able to help with setting this up.

Resolved:

The panel agreed that the priorities for Wolverhampton in developing a creative, cultural and visitor economy should include:

- How micro businesses can be supported including alternative forms of governance.
- How the city's diversity can be incorporated more widely into its cultural events including how to introduce new technology ideas such as internet café, and
- How to attract and sustain a franchise hotel chain in the city.

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Stronger City Economy Scrutiny Panel

26 September 2017

Report title	Bilston – Local Economic Development and Growth	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Cabinet Member for City Economy Cabinet Member for City Economy	
Corporate Plan outcome	An environment where new and existing businesses thrive	
Wards affected	Bilston East, Bilston North and Ettingshall	
Accountable Director	Keren Jones, Service Director, City Economy	
Originating service	City Economy	
Accountable employee	Charlotte Johns Neil White Tel Email	Head of Service, City Economy Scrutiny Officer, Governance 01902 550181 charlotte.johns@wolverhampton.gov.uk neil.white@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by		

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Stronger City Economy Scrutiny Panel is asked to consider how can the Council help to support the development and strengthening of the local economy in Bilston?

1.0 Purpose

Within the context set out below, the Stronger City Economy Scrutiny Panel is asked to consider:

- How can the Council help to support the development and strengthening of the local economy in Bilston?
- What else should be done?
- Who are the key partners, what is their role and how can they contribute?

2.0 Background – Local Economic Development and Growth

- 2.1 Friends Provident Foundation in its Creating Good City Economies in the UK states that “Traditional economics – inward investment, regeneration programmes, enterprise zones, the prioritisation of economic growth and reliance on trickle down – has had some successes. It has brought in investment and improved the infrastructure of the UK’s major cities, turned city centres into hubs of culture and tourism, and – over decades – prevented places from sliding further into decline.
- 2.2 But this agglomeration model – the dominant local economic model for UK cities – creates as many losers as winners and is an outdated approach to city economies that are currently experiencing huge social, technological and environmental change. This dominant model favours city centre economies, skilled workers and high-end jobs. It starts with the physical – buildings and infrastructure – rather than the needs of people. It encourages people to move or commute to areas of opportunity rather than creating jobs close to the neighbourhoods in which they live”.
- 2.3 The Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) in Productive local economies: creating resilient places argues that “economic development cannot always be conceived on a narrow economic imperative, such as competitiveness or growth as it does not match wider economic reality and makes some places hostage to impossible aspirations. Where growth is achieved, it is important that it is robust and used effectively within a location, complementing place identity and community aspirations, and does not simply evaporate when an area experiences an economic shock.
- 2.4 In addition, we are seeing successful areas which do have economic growth adopting even more aggressive growth strategies without due regard for the place, culture and identity or indeed the environmental consequences, both locally and globally.
- 2.5 So much decision-making focuses on our policies of place (e.g. land use planning, architecture, transport, new schools or housing, even public parks) and tends to be dislocated from economic development. In an atmosphere of public sector cuts, there is a real and pressing need for greater integration between place and economic policy.
- 2.6 Where local economies are too dependent on either the public, commercial or social aspects of their economy, place resilience can be vulnerable and brittle, and areas may fail to take advantage of opportunities”.
- 2.7 Furthermore, they state that “where our research has identified strong resilience of place, a common reason for this strength has been the proactive leadership and/or coordinating role of a local authority. However, all too often, and wrongly, the role of local authorities is perceived as simply being about delivery. This leadership role can take many forms but

the most common is where the local authority plays a facilitating role, working to broker relationships between different parts of the private, public and social economies”.

3.0 Good Business Relationship Support

- 3.1 Some local authorities offer a range of business support services to encourage economic development and regeneration. The Young Foundation 2011 report “Grow Your Own - how local authorities can support social enterprise” found that tailored business support for social enterprises and entrepreneurs is the bedrock of growth in the sector.

The local authorities within their project had a variety of business support actions for businesses that included:

- Ensuring that social enterprises have access to specialist business support, especially on legal structures and financial planning;
- Mapping the sector – the services they provide and the assets they have available;
- Analysing gaps and growth areas in the public-sector market and providing intelligence;
- Mapping national, regional and local organisations providing advice and good practice and then promoting those;
- Creating a social enterprise page on the council website;
- Promoting the use of self-assessment tools to help social enterprises/ entrepreneurs identify their development needs;
- Setting up an online directory of local goods and services and social enterprises.

4.0 Community Development and Regeneration

- 4.1 According to Rubin & Taylor (2007), regeneration approaches need to pay closer attention to the complex dynamics of an area and seek to build on its distinctiveness - whether this is physical, social, economic or environmental.
- 4.2 The Local Government Association’s report “Grow Your Own Way - taking a localist approach to regeneration” states that successful programmes show signs that they have achieved success in at least some of the following criteria:
- Physical success – making the area a more desirable place to live physically – which can be demonstrated through increases in house values or improved access to transport;
 - Economic success – improving job prospects and growth potential – which can be demonstrated through an increase in the number and type of jobs; income per capita; rise in business rates; or a reduction in the amount of vacant land; and
 - Social success – improving the wellbeing and happiness of the people who live there – which can be demonstrated through improved health indicators; an increase in community spirit, social bonds and volunteering; or improved political engagement.

4.3 What Works Scotland and Training and Employment Research Unit in their June 2017 report “What Works in Economic Regeneration” highlighted key ingredients to achieve successful regeneration of an area.

These are:

- Community support and buy in. It is really important to ask and keep on asking local people what it is they want and what do they feel needs to change;
- A sustained effort over a long period of time is critical;
- The regeneration process needs to be managed and led, and engage all the key organisations whose input is needed to create sustainable regeneration;
- The process needs to be driven by a clear vision for the area being regenerated;
- Transport connectivity are critical, to raise the attractiveness of private sector investment in a locality, but also to connect poorer neighbourhoods to employment opportunity;
- Proximity to major assets, such as developable land, are a key factor;
- Overall management of the regeneration process is best placed in the hands of a regeneration vehicle such as a development company of some kind or another;
- Stability in programme, funding, governance and strategy;
- Buy in from key local influencers.

5.0 What issues are there in Bilston?

5.1 Bilston is facing several socio-economic issues, including:

- **High population growth** – between 2001 and 2011 the population of the three wards covering Bilston (Bilston North, Bilston East and Ettingshall) increased by 11.3% to 39,058. This rate of growth exceeded the Wolverhampton rate of 5.4%, the West Midlands rate of 6.4% and the England and Wales rate of 7.8% (source: Census data, Nomis). Bilston’s population will grow further with the development of Bilston Urban Village;
- **Low (but increasing) working-age population** – between 2001 and 2011 the proportion of the population of the three wards who were of working age increased from 61.8% to 63.5%. Despite this increase, the proportion remains below the Wolverhampton (63.9%), regional (63.6%) and England and Wales (64.7%) levels (source: Census data, Nomis);
- **High levels of social renting** – in 2011, 37% of the population of the three wards lived in social rented accommodation, below the figure of 40% in 2001. The rate for the three wards is significantly above the averages for Wolverhampton (28%), the West Midlands (19%) and England and Wales (18%), all of which saw a decrease between 2001 and 2011 (source: Census data, Nomis);
- **Low levels of home ownership** – in 2011, 49% of the population of the three wards lived in owner-occupied accommodation, below the figure of 51% in 2001. The rate for the three wards is significantly below the averages for Wolverhampton (57%), the West Midlands (65%) and England and Wales (64%).

All of these spatial areas saw a decrease in home ownership between 2001 and 2011 (source: Census data, Nomis);

- **Relatively low skills levels** – in 2015, only 22% of the working age population of the Wolverhampton South East (SE) parliamentary constituency, in which Bilston is located, were educated to NVQ level 4. This was below the rate for Wolverhampton (24%), the West Midlands (31%) and England and Wales (37%). However, the percentage of working-age people with NVQ level 4 in Wolverhampton SE had increased from 15% in 2011. The percentage of Wolverhampton SE's working-age residents with no qualifications in 2015 was 20%, above the Wolverhampton (19%), regional (13%) and England and Wales (9%) levels (source: annual population survey, Nomis);
- **High levels of deprivation** – the seven Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) which cover Bilston have an average deprivation ranking of 3,311, placing them in the most deprived 10.1% of LSOAs in England. Two of the seven LSOAs are in the most deprived 2.1% of LSOAs in England (source: Indices of Multiple Deprivation, 2015);
- **Increasing levels of economic activity** – between 2010/11 and 2015/16, economic activity rates in Wolverhampton SE increased from 69.8% to 75.1%. In 2010/11, the rate for Wolverhampton SE was below the rate for Wolverhampton but is now above Wolverhampton's rate of 72.0%. Wolverhampton SE's economic activity rate remains below the regional rate of 75.4% and the Great Britain rate of 77.8% (source: annual population survey, Nomis);
- **Decreasing unemployment** – between February 2013 and February 2017, the number of people claiming Jobseekers Allowance in the three wards 2,385 to 1,290, a decrease of 45.9%. However, this rate of decline was below the Wolverhampton rate of 46.1%, the regional rate of 48.5% and the England and Wales rate of 50.9% (source: claimant count, Nomis);
- **Relatively low income levels** – in 2016, the median gross weekly pay of full-time workers resident in Wolverhampton SE was £431.20, below the Wolverhampton (£440.80), West Midlands (£507.80) and England and Wales (£541.00) levels. Between 2012 and 2016, earnings in Wolverhampton SE increased by 3.5%. This rate of change exceeded the Wolverhampton rate of 2.2% but was below the regional rate of 8.2% and the England and Wales rate of £6.4% (source: annual survey of hours and earnings, Nomis);
- **Poor health levels** – a report for the City Council in 2014 showed that life expectancy in Bilston East ward is among the lowest in the City, with average life expectancy for men of 74.8 years and women of 80.1 years. The averages for England in 2015 were 79.4 for men and 83.1 for women (source: Public Health England: Health Profiles); and

- **High crime levels** – in 2016 there were 152 reported crimes per 1,000 residents in Bilston East ward. This is above the Wolverhampton average of 97, the West Midlands average of 95 and the England and Wales average of 102 (source: Home Office and Department for Communities and Local Government).

5.2 In terms of business indicators, Bilston has seen:

- **Increasing employment** – in 2015, the number of people resident in Wolverhampton SE who were in employment increased by 11.5% to 29,000. This rate of increase exceeded the West Midlands rate of 6.3% and the Great Britain rate of 7.3%. Over the same period, the number of residents of Wolverhampton in employment fell by 9.1% (source: annual population survey, Nomis). Strong employment growth in Wolverhampton SE was seen in education, water and waste and transport and storage. Significant declines were seen in finance and insurance and real estate (source: business register and employment survey (BRES), Nomis);
- **Relatively weak growth in the number of businesses** – between 2010 and 2015, the number of businesses in the three mid-layer super output areas covering Bilston increased by 6.5% to 820. However, this rate of increase was below the rates for Wolverhampton (14.4%), the West Midlands (14.3%) and Great Britain (18.4%) (source: UK business count, Nomis); and
- **Business growth in lower value sectors** - Wolverhampton SE has a relatively high proportion of business units compared to the regional and national averages in the production, motor trades, wholesale, retail and transport and storage sectors. Sectors in which the area has a relatively low proportion of business units include information and communication and professional, scientific and technical (Source: UK business – activity, size and location, ONS).

6.0 **How does Bilston fit into the Council's Economic Plans?**

6.1 The Council's City Strategy has several priority actions that relate to the work in Bilston. These are:

- Attracting new businesses – because attracting strategic companies and businesses with high growth potential will bring with them new job opportunities, supply chain opportunities, and raise the national and international profile of Wolverhampton in terms of inward investment, innovation and trade. We also need to grow our own new companies by supporting local entrepreneurship and business start-up.
- Supporting businesses to develop and grow – because we need all forms of businesses to be competitive and flourish, including social enterprise, co-operatives, mutuals and not for profit organisations.
- Supporting more people to be active within their communities – because we want more people to take the opportunities that will become available from the decentralisation and localism agenda, as it will open the door to new forms of

social entrepreneurship, whilst existing opportunities such as volunteering enable people to gain new skills and experiences and can provide a route into employment.

- 6.2 Bilston Corridor Area Action Plan (AAP) is part of the statutory land-use planning document that sits under the Black Country Core Strategy. Its aim is to:
“Secure investment to ensure that Bilston Town Centre provides a wide range of services that are attractive and accessible to local people, underpinned by a vibrant High Street and Market and a high-quality environment reflecting both proud heritage and modern design.”
- 6.3 Today, the Bilston Corridor is one of the key regeneration areas in Wolverhampton and acts as a “gateway” linking Wolverhampton to the Black Country and Birmingham by rail, Metro, road and canal. The corridor has access to the motorway network via the Black Country Route and sustainable access to Wolverhampton City Centre and Birmingham via the Metro line.

7.0 What is the Council currently doing?

- 7.1 The Council offers businesses a support package that includes a dedicated account manager who:
- Advises on available business sites;
 - Gives bespoke information relevant to current - and future - business activity
 - help businesses to explore potential funding and advise on access to financial assistance;
 - Provides a tailored recruitment service;
 - Works with the business to help make it a success.
- 7.2 The Council is running several events through its Business Week from Monday 25 to Friday 29 September 2017.
- 7.3 Also the Council is undertaking various workstreams that are summarised in the attached document including supporting the Bilston Business Improvement District, supporting enterprise and business development, encouraging development of the town centre, progressing the Bilston Urban Village project, consideration of a community hub and the Gallery and Library, and a programme of environmental enhancements.

8.0 What can Partners/Stakeholders contribute?

Local economies aren't simply an isolated silo of private sector activity that can be encouraged and shaped. They are made up of a network of social, public and commercial economic activity. These aspects are interconnected and dependent on one another.

- 8.1 The CLES report “Productive local economies: creating resilient places” states that “the complexity of interventions in town centres means that it is essential to ensure coordinated delivery across various local authority departments and to work closely with town centre businesses, land and business owners and voluntary and community groups.

9.0 Approach

- 9.1 The Committee will hear from the following witnesses in evidence sessions to help the Panel answer the questions:

- How can the Council help to support the development and strengthening of the local economy in Bilston?
- What else should be done?
- Who are the key partners, what is their role and how can they contribute?

- 9.2 The witnesses have been asked to answer the initial questions below and the Panel will have the opportunity to have further questions of the witnesses on their evidence. The witnesses are as follows.

9.3 Local Community Groups.

At **18:05** local residents’ groups have been invited to attend to answer the initial following questions:

- What are you currently doing in Bilston?
- What would you like to do?
- What support do you need?
- What would encourage local people to spend more within Bilston?

9.4 Local business groups

At **18:35** local business groups have been invited to attend to answer the initial following questions:

- What are you currently doing in Bilston?
- What would you like to do?
- What support do you need?
- What would encourage local people to spend more within Bilston?

9.5 Panel Recommendations

From **19:05** the Panel will consider the evidence heard and decide how it may wish to the answer the questions in 9.1.

10.0 Financial implications

There none arising directly from this report. [ES/18092017/Z]

11.0 Legal implications

There none arising directly from this report. (RB/1092017/K)

12.0 Equalities implications

There none arising directly from this report.

13.0 Environmental implications

There none arising directly from this report.

14.0 Human resources implications

There none arising directly from this report.

15.0 Risk implications

There none arising directly from this report.

16.0 Corporate landlord implications

There none arising directly from this report.

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Bilston Action Plan – September 2017 – Next Steps/Actions

Key Workstreams	Action	Officer	Target Date	Progress
Stream 1: Supporting an effective BID (Business Improvement District)	40 new radios for retailers.	Isobel Woods	Sept	In place and use being monitored.
	Installation of six new CCTV cameras. Ensure positioning of CCTV is considered with Lisa Palmer (Crime Reduction Officer).	IW	Nov	Procurement agreed. Working with Police to look at coverage of hot spots
	Local family event for Black Country Day.	IW	Closed	Successful event (see magazine coverage).
	Addressing car park crime. Meeting with crime reduction partners and the police has taken place.	IW	Sept	Partners are considering what measures can be introduced.
	Christmas Programme including lights	IW	01/12/17	BID to invest in lights working with partners to establish a Xmas programme for the Town.
	Appointment of new BID Manager	IW	Sept	Interviews stage.
Stream 2: Enterprise and Business Development	Business Navigators - activity report.	IW	Sept	New officer now in post.
	Wolves at Work - progress report on outcomes for Bilston residents.	IW	Sept	Project established, fully staffed and 625 jobs delivered across city.
	Engagement with larger companies - activity report. Who is in area, what do we know about them, contacts and next steps?	IW	Sept	Investment Manager is engaged with larger companies including Muller.
	Business Support Event. 45 businesses attended. Positive response and follow ups taking place.	IW	2/12/17	Small Business Saturday included in Xmas programme.

Key Workstreams	Action	Officer	Target Date	Progress
Stream 3: Town Centre Development Plan	Regeneration Framework - Members workshop to be held in Bilston to coincide with Bilston members group meeting.	Paul Lakin	Sept	To be supported by Amion.
	Market renovation – car parking, outdoor space improvement including canopy – to be discussed at Members workshop.	Colin Parr	Sept	Positive meeting held with traders in July.
	Land to the side of the Bert Williams Leisure Centre progress report.	Paul Lakin	Sept	Interim parking use on southern section being investigated. Family pub due to open in Oct.
	Make reference to Bilston as a town (rather than a district or area) and Bilston town centre in future Council publications. Consider replacing Bilston centre directional signage with Bilston town centre.	Stephen Alexander	Sept	Seek approval of principles and replace signage as it needs renewing?
Stream 4: The Urban Village Project	350-400 new homes - preferred bidder announced, Countryside Properties Ltd. programme for build	Paul Lakin	Oct	Contracting process.
	Public open space works and the improvement of the canal towpath including motorbike barriers – start on site.	PL	Oct	Due to complete in April 2018.
	Loxdale Primary proposed expansion and relocation. Planning application being prepared.	Bill Hague	Sept	Public consultation complete. Proposed opening 2019/20.
Stream 5: Bilston Urban Village	New employment uses feasibility study – update report.	Paul Lakin	Sept	Currently being progressed with consultants.

Key Workstreams	Action	Officer	Target Date	Progress
Employment Site	New employment uses - delivery strategy will be taken to Cabinet.	PL	Nov	Initial proposal for LEP funding for remediation and site infrastructure has already been submitted.
Stream 6: Community Hub/ Gallery and Library	Health and Social Care Hub – service strategy report. This will lead to the production of a detailed outline business case.	JN	Oct	Consultants PCH are engaging with key stakeholders and will hold two workshops in Sept.
	Bilston Library and Gallery location review – feasibility study update.	Charlotte Johns	Sept	Feasibility study should be complete by the end of September.
Stream 7: Environmental Enhancements Programme	Repair drainage channel blocks and block paving.	Steve Woodward	Complete	Further repairs will be completed as required.
	Audit of existing street furniture - disused, redundant or low grade furniture to be removed – progress report.	SW	tbc	Subject to identification of budget.
	Review of existing signage and inaccurate direction signs removed or re-positioned – progress report.	Nick Broomhall	Oct	Scheduled in to work programme to be investigated and completed by Oct 2017.
	Encourage owners to tidy up their untidy buildings	Stephen Alexander	Sept	Phase 1 audit carried out and tidy-up proceedings commenced.
	Proposed environmental enhancement works: Street furniture and public art painting, removal of dead trees on the High St and block paving over redundant tree pits, replacement of litter bins and LED street lighting in the High St. Once the budget availability is agreed painting and other	Steve Woodward	Sept	Potential to secure short-term capital budget being explored.

Key Workstreams	Action	Officer	Target Date	Progress
	works will commence which will lift the Public Realm in Bilson Town centre.			
	Consideration of options for improving enforcement to reduce the number of vehicles illegally driving along the High St – progress report.	Nick Broomhall	Sept	Routine repairs and maintenance to blockwork in the town centre is ongoing, with the damage being caused in the main by HGV vehicle deliveries to the business and regular through traffic.
	Strategy for key long term vacant premises – progress report.	Stephen Alexander	Sept	Meetings held with new owners of former Art Gallery and Pipe hall to review options.
	District parking review – due to be complete by the end of the year.	Lisa Taylor	Dec	Options being evaluated.
	Bilston Urban Village to be named “Bert Turner Boulevard”.	Gwyn James	Sept	Agreed in principle, signs to be installed. Awaiting feedback from adjacent businesses to confirm no issues.