

London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

The Economy, Arts, Sports, and Public Realm Policy and Accountability Committee Minutes



Wednesday 29 March 2023

PRESENT

Committee members: Councillors Rory Vaughan (Chair), Liz Collins, Adam Peter Lang, Ashok Patel and Jackie Borland

Other Councillors:

Councillor Sharon Holder (Cabinet Member for Public Realm)
Councillor Stephen Cowan (Leader of the Council)

Officers:

Andrew Munk (Assistant Director Economic Development)
David Pack (Strategic Head – Industrial Strategy)
Joanne Woodward (Director of Planning and Property)
Philippa Cartwright (Project Director, Planning and Economic Development)
Bram Kainth (Strategic Director of Environment)
Steve Hollingworth (Assistant Director Leisure, Sport & Culture)
Richard Gill (Senior Parks Manager)
Charles Francis (Committee Coordinator)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Jon Pickstone (Strategic Director of Economy) and Councillor Andrew Jones (Cabinet Member for the Economy).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Economy, Arts, Sports and Public Realm Policy and Accountability Committee meeting held on 30 January 2023 were approved.

4. **UPDATE ON THE REFRESH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM'S INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY**

Councillor Stephen Cowan (Leader of the Council) introduced the item. He set the context of where the Council was within the lifespan of the Industrial Strategy, as well as provide an overview of the current economic growth within the borough. Details were provided on how the strategy had evolved from the early work conducted in partnership with Imperial College, London, to where it currently stood, having incorporated continual learning from several innovation districts across the globe.

The Committee noted that the strategy took inspiration from the German model of Länder and city states. Details were provided on the role of key partners / drivers of the Industrial Strategy. In particular, the pivotal roles played by Professor Alice Gast (previous President of Imperial College London) and by Greg Jackson (Founder and CEO of Octopus Energy Group) and Sophie Devonshire (CEO of The Marketing Society) as 'business commissioners' at the birth of the strategy, as well as the shared vision of the Council and its partners to become a global economic hotspot.

Highlighting some key statistics, it was noted that Hammersmith and Fulham had received £5 billion worth of high value business investment since 2017, which was more than all of the rest of West London put together. The reason the Council was taking the strategy into its next phase was to ensure it was inclusive, developed further, and by doing so, became the new Silicon Valley in Europe.

Andrew Munk (Assistant Director Economic Development) reiterated the aim of the taking the strategy into its next phase and the Committee noted that officers were working on a action plan and governance plan to oversee the strategy.

David Pack (Strategic Head – Industrial Strategy) provided a presentation which covered the following aspects:

- The progress made since 2017.
- Contextual change - the different social and economic backdrop.
- The changed context along with relevant manifesto commitments – An indicative chapter/topic list (of 1.Opportunity, 2. Growth,3. Inclusion and 4. Place).
- Some illustrative outcomes under each of the four chapters.
- The wider considerations for refreshing the Industrial Strategy.
- A suggested time-line for the strategy.
- Employing a culture of delivery to drive a refreshed industrial strategy.

Councillor Adam Peter Lang commented that the term 'refresh' was a good word to use. He explained it was important to take stock of where the strategy was. He

highlighted his interest in the pandemic and mused what was the same, what was different and what would be different in urban areas in the future. It was important for the Council to be ambitious but also realistic in what it set out to achieve. He commended the innovation and suggested this could be communicated more clearly to residents.

Referencing a book entitled *No Ordinary Disruption: The Four Global Forces Breaking all the Trends* – Councillor Stephen Cowan explained that compared to the Industrial Revolution, current change was happening 10 times faster, on 300 times the scale and with 3 million more times the impact. Paraphrasing his words, while it was very difficult to predict what the economy would look like in 10 years' time, what was certain, was that it would be science based. Comparing and contrasting the approaches taken in the United States and South Korea he suggested that in the future, the world would be dominated by the smartest industries. Further discussions focused on the United Kingdom's rating on the Bloomberg Innovation Index, several innovation districts as well as some of the lessons stemming from the pandemic, such as the rise of remote working through Zoom and Teams and the influence this had on work patterns.

Referencing the report, Councillor Ashok Patel commented on the progress which had been made since the refresh, and in particular, the level of investment which had been attracted to the borough, the creation of a further jobs and importance of economic inclusivity.

Commenting on job creation, Councillor Stephen Cowan confirmed the Council had concentrated on providing office space, as well as high quality laboratory space which was essential for the future economy. It was noted that to maintain start up and scale ups, these spaces also needed to be affordable and flexible. In terms of the inclusivity, the Committee noted that a multi-million pound EdCity development, which includes a major youth centre was being built in White City to provide opportunities to young people across the borough.

Andrew Munk added that while the report set out what the Council already knew, including the role of Black Lives Matter and the pandemic in raising the profile of inequality, taking the strategy to its next stage would specifically address inclusivity by providing opportunities. Referring to current work streams, he also highlighted the importance of intersectionality, and by analysing datasets, the Council would be able to assess how successful it was being in delivering its aims. David Pack confirmed that 6,500 jobs in the digital / creative sectors had been created since 2017. He also provided further details on the data sourced through the dealroom.com database, which generated the estimates of investment into high growth businesses in the borough.

Councillor Jackie Borland commended the progress which had been made. She asked about what was being done to assist the 3,300 residents with no qualifications and how it was envisaged the strategy would affect the areas outside the White City Innovation District, such as its impact on Fulham Broadway.

In response, Councillor Stephen Cowan confirmed the Industrial strategy was for the whole borough. It was noted that White City had received approximately £1.5 billion

of the current £5 billion total investment figure. Details were provided about how the Council worked with developers to encourage growth, its relationship with Imperial College in building affordable homes for students / faculty, and also concentrating on providing flexible office space. Discussion also focused on the outreach work being conducted across the borough, and the signposting the skills which were required in the current and future employment marketspace.

Councillor Jackie Borland suggested that reading the report as a lay person, there was lots of information about Imperial College, White City and the White City Innovation District, but it might be helpful to add some key points and a further narrative on some of the key concepts to help explain these in more detail.

In response, Councillor Stephen Cowan, confirmed the vision was for the whole borough to feel like a large campus, where it was green and a pleasant place to live, the air was clean, with vibrant shops but also an exciting place to be as there was a large scientific endeavour on the doorstep.

Councillor Liz Collins asked several questions. Firstly, she enquired about artificial intelligence and the effect this would have on industry in the future, and specifically if the borough was ready for this challenge. And secondly, she noted that many women faced challenges returning to work (after the pandemic) and asked if businesses were going to provide childcare.

In response Councillor Stephen Cowan confirmed that affordable childcare was important and provided details of what the Council was doing to address this challenge. In relation to artificial intelligence, Andrew Munk provided details of how the Council was working with schools and thinking about the curriculum so that skill-sets for the future were developed. With regards to childcare, Andrew Munk explained that the borough was unusual in that it recognised that childcare was a key driver in developing the Industrial Strategy and the council would be working in partnership with business to improve provision. The Leader referred to the German approach to childcare and how this was enshrined within its constitution.

Councillor Rory Vaughan, the Chair, commended the progress which had been made but underlined that the update needed some tangible signs of success, including some telling statistics of residents that had been assisted to achieve skills and employment. Referencing the Cultural Strategy and the Civic Campus within the agenda, he noted these areas were also building blocks for the development of the Industrial Strategy. The Chair welcomed the progress which had been made and requested that it was revisited in a year's time.

Action – That the borough's Industrial Strategy be revisited at April 2024 committee meeting – Andrew Munk

RESOLVED

1. For the Committee both note and comment on the report.

5. UPDATE ON DEVELOPMENT OF A CULTURAL STRATEGY FOR HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

David Pack, Strategic Head of Industrial Strategy introduced the report which provided an update on the development of a cultural strategy for Hammersmith and Fulham.

The Committee noted the strategy included three strategic themes, each of which were supported by outcomes. Officers confirmed these were intended to be delivered as a shared endeavour by all partners involved in the strategy's implementation, with specific responsibilities set out in an accompanying, detailed action plan. These themed outcomes were the fundamental goals that the strategy sought to achieve, and they provided direction for all the actions and decisions made during the implementation process:

- **Destination:** *An exciting and healthy place in which to live, work, study and visit.*
- **Creation:** *An even stronger cultural and creative sector driving the local economy*
- **Inclusion:** *Our residents benefiting from participation in arts, culture and heritage.*

In terms of timescales, David Pack confirmed the intention was to present the strategy to Cabinet this summer (2023) and would include an action plan appended to the draft strategy.

Councillor Ashok Patel asked for further details to be provided on Activist Group and in terms of consultation, whether minority ethnic groups had been engaged. In response, David Pack provided details of who Activist Group were and their role in developing the Strategy. In terms of the consultation phase, he confirmed this had been far and wide and had included faith and community groups. And although a scientific approach had not been taken (to consultation) there had been a breadth of approach which had focused on geographic areas.

Councillor Adam Peter Lang noted that young people had very different views and perceptions of what culture was, and asked if the strategy could be strengthened in this regard. In response, Andrew Munk, Assistant Director Economic Development explained the strategy could be tweaked, so that more emphasis was placed on young people. He explained that ensuring there were clear pathways for the young people was important and the opportunities section of the strategy did need to be strengthened to make it more prominent.

Councillor Liz Collins highlighted the heritage aspects of the strategy and asked officers what young people perceived their heritage to be. In response, officers confirmed that to reinforce the strategy, the outcomes from the six workshops which had been conducted with young people in January 2023, could be incorporated within the strategy.

Councillor Jackie Borland asked about the consultation which had been conducted as part of the Christmas markets held in Hammersmith and North End Road in late 2022 and how many residents were engaged? In response, David Pack explained that this work was done by Activist and several hundred people had been canvassed.

Action – David Pack to provide further information regarding the consultation undertaken at Christmas markets held in Hammersmith and North End Road.

Councillor Jackie Borland commended the work which had been done so far on the Cultural Strategy, and especially the efforts in relation to heritage. She highlighted that the Borough had a number of wonderful sites and further work was required to highlight these. In response, David Pack confirmed the Council planned to recruit new staff focusing on the visitor economy to the borough.

Action - David Pack - The Chair request that the visitor economy be brought back to the committee in the future

The Leader, Stephen Cowan, commended the communications work which had been done but highlighted there was a different skillset to marketing some of the borough's key assets. Taking the Committee's views as a whole, the Leader welcomed the idea that a marketing plan for the Arts and Culture Strategy should be developed.

Action – Andrew Munk / David Pack - That Officers develop a marketing plan for the Arts and Culture Strategy

Closing the item, the Chair, Councillor Rory Vaughan confirmed that there was a significant opportunity to take the marketing plan for the Arts and Culture strategy forward. He confirmed there was a noteworthy amount of history within the borough and it was important the heritage and cultural aspects were explored further.

The Committee and Andrew Munk thanked Paul James from Activist and Thomas Dodd, Arts Officer, for their work in developing the strategy.

Resolved

1. That the Committee both note and comment on the report.

6. CIVIC CAMPUS PROGRAMME UPDATE

Joanne Woodward (Director of Planning and Property) introduced the report which provided a progress update on the Civic Campus and the plans for the coming year.

Philippa Cartwright (Project Director, Planning and Economic Development) provided a presentation which covered the following aspects:

- The project scope and delivery.

- The opportunities afforded by the civic campus (Regeneration of western King Street, new homes, café, restaurant, shops, office and entertainment etc).
- Details of the buildings and their context within the civic campus footprint.
- A before and after set of visualisations.
- Details of the energy strategy and use of a ground source heat pump.
- Details of the design and co-production work.
- Details of the design awards which had been won.
- Progress to date and future works.
- The impact of the civic campus and details on place shaping.

Councillor Adam Peter Lang commended the civic campus as a landmark of local democracy renewal. He asked if he were a local resident, rather than a Councillor, how would he find out about the project. In response, Philippa Cartwright provided an overview of the build to date, some of the issues that had arisen and explained that officers were currently working on a communications plan that would be rolled out in early June 2023. These details would be available on-line, in print and would clearly set out what the civic campus was and its goals.

Councillor Ashok Patel noted the estimated cost and projected income streams from the project and asked if Officers could comment further. In response, Philippa Cartwright confirmed the latest position statement was set out in February 2023 Cabinet report. Commenting further, the Leader, Councillor Stephen Cowan provided an update on the break-even projections for the project set against the context of stamp duty changes, Brexit, rising energy costs and the innovation required to create a sustainable invest to save project.

Councillor Jackie Borland commented on the design of the new public square in front of the Town Hall and noted that it did not incorporate any rain shelters. In response, Joanne Woodward confirmed that the Town Hall Commissioners had considered the architectural merits of the scheme, including planting and the views through the new square to the Town Hall. While shelters had been considered, it was felt on balance, that these would impinge on the views across the site to the attractive refurbished listed building. This also encouraged residents to go into the town hall and served to reinforce local democracy renewal.

Commenting further on the design, the Leader, Councillor Stephen Cowan confirmed a considerable amount of thought had gone into ensuring the town hall felt a special place. An aim of the civic campus had been to lock in future democracy and ensure the buildings became a time capsule of where local democracy currently stood.

The Chair, Councillor Rory Vaughan, asked about the status of Nigel Playfair Avenue. Officers confirmed this would be pedestrianised and would be highlighted in future communications about the civic campus. Reflecting on what the Leader had said, the Chair concurred that the new civic campus had a different feel (to the old iteration of the town hall) and this needed to be communicated to residents. In terms of the work conducted so far, the Leader, Councillor Stephen Cowan confirmed the site had been marketed heavily during the Planning phases and about fifteen exhibitions had been held to date. As well as incorporating world class design, the building would have its own curator, be inclusive, strong green credentials and be

Lord Rogers last building. The Chair was pleased to learn that the marketing plan for the Civic Campus would start in the near future.

Resolved

1. That the Committee both note and comment on the report.

7. UPDATE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BOROUGH'S PARKS FOR THE FUTURE STRATEGY

Steve Hollingworth (Assistant Director Leisure, Sport & Culture) provided a brief introduction, which was followed by a presentation from Richard Gill (Senior Parks Manager) on the development of the borough's parks for the future strategy.

The presentation covered the following aspects:

- Defining the Strategy
- Setting the goals, including:
 1. Quality
 2. Accessibility
 3. Listening to residents
 4. Building alliances for change
 5. Celebrating the good stuff
 6. Staying Active
 7. Climate and biodiversity aware
 8. Measuring performance
- Setting a timetable
- Progress to date and next steps

Councillor Adam Peter Lang commented on the use of open spaces during pandemic period (for physical and mental health well-being) and agreed the Council had been right to close the parks early on. He noted that parks were important, as a high proportion of residents did not have their own personal outdoor space. He supported the work that was being undertaken and requested more trees were planted across the borough.

Given the heat waves and drought London suffered in 2022, Councillor Adam Peter Lang asked if there was any scope to drill in any of the borough's parks to access groundwater and mentioned it was important that any new developments and changes to parks usage were clearly communicated to residents.

In response, Steve Hollingworth confirmed there would always be a formal tension over parks usage (dog walking, formal sport, activities and general recreational usage). He also confirmed that there was a bore hole in Hurlingham Park. In relation to selling parks and celebrating what they offered, he explained that new signage incorporating QR codes had been devised to enable residents to access information and a new online booking system was up and running (so that pitches / areas could be booked for activities).

Councillor Ashok Patel asked what consultation had been done with schools (in relation to the Parks Forum) as some schools such as Hurlingham Academy did not have a playground. In response, Steve Hollingworth confirmed that parks were being booked (and heavily used) by schools but it was a difficult balance to strike between managing the space and sustainability of the parks. He confirmed that officers would continue to engage with schools and include them in the second consultation phase of the strategy.

Councillor Jackie Borland noted that a number of private events had been held in Bishops Park and Hurlingham and it was important to residents that these spaces were returned to public use as quickly as possible. So, while events such as Polo in the Park were popular and well attended, it did close Hurlingham Park for a number of weeks. In response, Steve Hollingworth agreed there was a balance which needed to be struck between commercial and community events and ensuring sufficient engagement and consultation was conducted in advance. Commenting further, Councillor Stephen Cowan provided details on the commercial aspects of Polo in the Park and how this had grown and developed over successive years.

Councillor Liz Collins commented on some of the issues that had arisen at Oktoberfest (beer festival) last year and asked if the LET Team would be patrolling future events. In response, Councillor Sharon Holder (Cabinet Member for Public Realm) confirmed the Authority were very mindful that parks needed to be returned to their normal usage quickly and Oktoberfest had been affected by very poor weather conditions (which had damaged the grass). She confirmed that the Oktoberfest event would not be returning this year to Lillie Road Recreation ground.

The Chair, Councillor Rory Vaughan confirmed he had seen the new signage and commented that the ancillary information about each of the parks was useful, interesting and had enhanced parks across the borough. The Chair asked officers to explain what the Parks Forum was and how they envisaged they would make use of this in conjunction with Friends Groups. In response, Steve Hollingworth provided details on the Parks Forum and explained that, over time, Friends Groups had evolved from a means to address specific issues. The Committee noted there were currently thirty Friends Groups which were supported by two Environment Officers and the Parks Forum acted as an umbrella organisation which represented the collective Friends Groups. Steve Hollingworth confirmed that the Parks Forum would review the memorandum of the Friends Groups to ensure they were truly representative (of local residents and their concerns).

The Chair asked about the Capital Programme, what this looked at, and whether this was reviewed by the Parks Forum. In response, Steve Hollingworth confirmed that the Parks Capital Programme was funded through Section 106 Agreements and that approximately two thirds of the current three-year programme had been delivered. The Chair asked Officers to comment on the upkeep of playgrounds within parks. In response, Richard Gill explained that playgrounds typically lasted between fifteen to twenty years, but this was dependant on what materials they had been made from. And so, the (anticipated) longevity of playgrounds and play spaces were factored into the Capital Programme. The Chair asked if playgrounds were replaced on a like for like basis. In response, Richard Gill confirmed that in the case of Brook Green for example, the timber had rotted away, and so when these were replaced it was

always a balance between materials, longevity and aesthetics. Steve Hollingworth confirmed that before any decisions were taken, feedback from Friends Groups was considered.

Concluding the item, the Chair noted that there had been changes to the weeding strategy. Officers confirmed that work was ongoing and suggested this topic could be investigated further towards the end of the year.

Resolved

1. That the Committee both note and comment on the report.

Meeting started: 7.00 pm
Meeting ended: 9.55 pm

Chair

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