



One City Economy and Skills Board Purpose, Vision Statement & Terms of Reference

In January 2019, Bristol came together as a city to publish the first iteration of the [One City Plan](#) and agree to work towards its vision of “a fair, healthy and sustainable city” by 2050.

As one of six One City thematic Boards, the Economy and Skills Board will drive action and play a key role in coordinating delivery of the goals set out in the One City Plan and setting the strategic direction for this theme. The Economy and Skills Board will sit alongside the other thematic Boards: Children & Young People, Environment, Health & Wellbeing, Homes & Communities, Transport and the Enabling Board of Culture and Creativity.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this agreement is to set out the roles and responsibilities of all members in being a member of the Economy and Skills Board. It also sets out the way the Economy and Skills Board operates. Each Board member has something unique to contribute and can influence the quality of life in Bristol.

2. Name

The Co-Chairs of the Economy and Skills Board are Councillor Andrew Brown, Chair of the Bristol City Council Economy and Skills Committee **and** Bristol Director, Business West, **Victoria Matthews**.

The Economy and Skills Board is a Partnership of the following members:

- Babbasa, Poku Osei
- Black South West Network (BSWN), Sado Jirde
- Bristol’s Women’s Commission, Sue Cohen
- City of Bristol College, Julia Gray
- Economic Development- Bristol City Council, Anesa Kritah
- Federation of Small Businesses (fsb), Sam Holliday
- Hargreaves Lansdown, Danny Cox
- Night Time Economy Advisor – Bristol City Council, Carly Heath
- Paragon Costs Solutions, Nick Lee
- Skills – Bristol City Council, Jane Taylor
- The Lloyds Bank South West, Adam Rainey
- The West of England Centre for Inclusive Living (WECIL), Dominic Ellison
- Trades Union Congress (TUC), Ines Lage
- University of Bristol (UoB), Barra Mac Ruairí
- University of the West of England (UWE), Dr Paul Bennett

- upReach, Joe Hensey
- Visit West, Kathryn Davis
- We The Curious, Donna Speed

3. Vision and Long Term Aims of the Board

As ambassadors for Bristol: The Economy and Skills Board will support the Bristol One City overall aim so that, “In 2050, Bristol is a fair, healthy and sustainable city”. It will champion, initiate and drive projects within Bristol that contribute to the Board’s 2050 vision that, “by 2050 everyone in Bristol will contribute to a sustainable, inclusive and growing economy from which all will benefit.”

The key function of the group is to work collaboratively within the Board and across the whole One City Structure and for all members to oversee/guide the implementation of the One City Plan and the delivery of Board activity aimed at tackling priorities identified within the Economy and Skills Strand of the One City Plan across Bristol.

The Economy and Skills Board will use networking and honest discussions to make connections between organisations to remove barriers, enabling a greater ability to solve issues and to ensure Economy and Skills sector solutions reflect the needs of citizens.

What the Board is:

- A forum that brings together different sectors across the city who are integral to the city’s Economy and Skills system. This includes a combination of, business and commerce representatives, skills providers, policy makers and technical experts.
- A forum of passionate and committed individuals representing different sectors in the city who want to make an active contribution to improving the city’s Economy and Skills sectors.
- A forum that uses its expertise and leverage to drive forward change and to deliver the One City Plan Goals, identifying and championing existing and future sectors in the city.
- A forum that has a public work programme and welcomes engagement from across the city in the delivery of its goals, championing the diversity of all those who live in it.
- A forum whose members agree to share their work within their own organisations and networks, via various channels
- A forum that recognises that:
 - it sits within a regional structure and contributes to that structure by being able to articulate the needs of Bristol’s citizens and deliver outcomes for those citizens
 - it does not duplicate existing structures and as such is focused both on Bristol and on the change that can be enacted within the city.
- A group with no formal decision-making authority – each attendee operates within the decision-making framework of their own organisation (e.g. the council officers within the council’s constitution).
- A group that recognises that we can better support the city if we work together to address our common challenges, and if we focus on action to enable this.

What We Are Not:

- A formal group that has formal decision-making capacities - as members, we must take any ideas or commitments etc. back to our own respective organisations and follow relevant decision-making frameworks.
- Only focused on our own organisations – we are focused instead on breaking down silos across the city.
- A council-only forum – the Board brings together partners to enable action across different sectors across the city, of which the council is only one part, and each partner plays a role in enabling delivery of the goals.
- A replacement for formal scrutiny function nor a forum for being updated on council activity only - the focus is on all sectors coming together to drive forward change.
- A duplication of existing structures within the city and region.

One City Principles for the Thematic Board:

- All activity is enabling and aligned to the delivery of the 2050 vision, six thematic visions, enabling vision and relevant sub-visions.
- Inclusion and diversity are at the core of all activity of the Board.
- Decisions are taken with consideration of other Boards and the need to break down silos between sectors.
- Thematic Boards openly communicate with each other to tackle systemic challenges and to maximise opportunities for collaboration.
- The One City Plan is regularly reviewed and updated; as are the thematic sections and other strands for cross-cutting activity.
- The Board will also examine future trends and projections in order to be ahead of future growth sectors and possibilities.
- The Green Agenda will be incorporated into the workplan of every Board.

4. Structure of the Board

4.1 Role and Responsibilities

The Economy and Skills Board provides a framework to connect planning, decision-making and resources; and to engage those within the sector. When working on behalf of the Economy and Skills Board or representing the views and interests of the Economy and Skills Board, members are required to:

- Be part of the City Office leadership framework, assisting the City Office in delivery and engage Economy and Skills stakeholders with the One City Plan and its associated projects.
- Offer advice to the One City Boards on Economy and Skills related matters and make recommendations on other aspects of the One City Plan that are impacted by the Economy and Skills sectors.
- Convene and enable subgroups to meet on a task and finish basis to help deliver the One City Plan Goals and investigate issues as required. Any relevant organisations can be

involved with consideration given to relevant One City advisory forums and Thematic Boards.

- Champion and promote inclusivity and diversity within the Economy and Skills sectors.
- Represent the interests of the Economy and Skills sectors.
- Communicate with and secure the participation of local communities in the Economy and Skills Board.
- Actively work with member organisations and other partners in the city to ensure their organisation contributes directly to the work of the Economy and Skills Board.
- Attend Economy and Skills Board meetings, or when unable to do so, nominate a named substitute to attend the meeting in accordance with paragraph 6.1 of this Agreement.

4.2 Legal and financial standing

The Economy and Skills Board will not be a legal entity or replicate Bristol City Council or other organisational structures. It does not directly control resources or employ staff, nor will it be able to enter contractual arrangements. It will not be able to make decisions about the use of public money. It also will not be regarded as a statutory body nor as scrutiny of the Local Authority's delivery of services, policy development or policy implementation – this is managed by the existing scrutiny function of Bristol City Council. The same applies equally to the West of England Combined Authority and the surrounding local authorities.

The Economy and Skills Board members are not required to make any financial contributions to the running of the Board. Its legal basis, powers, and ability to raise and direct funds and powers may be reviewed in future.

4.3 Membership

4.3.1. Number of members

The Economy and Skills Board will be limited to 19 members and two Co-Chairs (*unless statutory). The membership position can be shared between two organisations. Contributors can be invited to attend the Economy and Skills Board based on the Board agenda. Observers from relevant agencies (e.g. West of England Combined Authority) may also be invited to attend.

4.3.2. Criteria for membership

The Economy and Skills Board members should have leadership roles or influence within their business, organisation or the sector, to collectively agree what members and their organisations can do and/or encourage others to act too. Leadership capability could relate to a range of attributes:

- A senior role in an Economy and Skills related business or organisation in the city.
- Providing the city with vital infrastructure and/or services that will be key to achieving the Board objectives, for example a utility.
- Being a key policy or regulatory body, which influences the key outcomes of the city.
- Being a key thought-leader and/or influencer, with an ability to shape or influence public, Business and/or organisational opinion and actions in the city.

- Being a representative of key service users' groups within the city to ensure that the needs of citizens are at the heart of the work of the Board
- Having other influence in the city, region or country which can assist with goals of the Board.

4.3.3. **Qualities**

Board members should possess the following qualities:

- Reside, work and/or be based in the city or region.
- Have skills/expertise in different aspects of Economy and Skills sectors
- Be able to show willingness and ability to engage with other aspects of Economy and Skills and beyond (in line with the One City Approach).
- Have agency to affect change, such as scale or impact of their business or organisation, their Personal influence have an ability to influence outcomes within their own organisations and/or in other fora.
- Be keen to provide city-level Economy and Skills sector leadership.

4.3.4. **Process of initial appointment & additional diversity provisions**

Current Board Members were appointed in June 2022 through an Open Expression of Interest process. Applications were reviewed by a panel comprising of:

- o One representative of the relevant Bristol City Council team;
- o one external partner with expertise in the sector;
- o A representatives of the Mayoral Equalities Commissions.

In May 2024 Bristol City Council governance arrangements changed from a Mayor and Cabinet model to a committee system. To reflect the change, the membership of the review panel has been updated to:

- o The relevant Political Co-Chair;
- o Lead representative(s) from the relevant Bristol City Council team
- o The City Office.

4.3.5. **Reserved positions**

There will be a position reserved for a member of the senior management of Bristol City Council who will bring technical expertise from their service area.

4.3.6. **Representation and limitations**

The Economy and Skills Board members may represent a business or organisation, or be members as individuals, subject to the following limitations: other than the BCC Senior Management level member, candidates must not be officials of any of the four local authorities in the West of England region or the West of England Combined Authority (although observers from these authorities are actively welcomed).

Board members will not be able to hold or actively seek political office, nor be a spokesperson for any political party. This does not preclude Board members from being a member of a political party. Processes for engaging political parties are likely to be determined on a case-by-case basis and, for Bristol City Council activity, in accordance with the council's scrutiny functions.

4.3.7. Term of appointment and ending of appointment

Members of the Economy and Skills Board are appointed for 18 months, and the membership will be reviewed and reconfirmed by the Board co-chairs and the City Office based on:

- Board attendance
- Active participation in projects and activities
- Championship of One City within individual networks and organisations
- Commitment to the collaborative nature of the One City Approach.

Board members may end their own appointment by notification, and the Board will implement provisions for filling any vacancies that arise, with the relevant sector/organisations.

4.3.8. Changes to affiliation and/or role

For Economy and Skills Board members who experience a change in organisational affiliation or change in job role during their membership, the member should make all other Board members aware of this and seek their guidance as to whether the change warrants a change in membership.

4.3.9. Removal of a member

In the unlikely event that it should prove necessary for Economy and Skills Board members to consider the removal of an Economy and Skills Board member, this shall require the passing of a specific resolution by a majority of members (excluding the member concerned) to that effect at a meeting of the Economy and Skills Board, provided that the Economy and Skills Board has invited and considered the views of the member concerned.

The Board member will be entitled to an exit interview to discuss the reasons for the suggested removal.

4.3.10 Task and Finish Groups

The Board will oversee Task and Finish Groups, to undertake work on identified priorities where necessary. These groups will reflect the decision making of the Board and report regularly on activity and progress. Board Support Officers, working with City Office, may invite additional stakeholders to the Task and Finish Groups; this will be dependent on the needs of the Groups and after discussion. Members should not invite colleagues without prior arrangement.

5. Appointment of Board Co-Chairs

5.1 Co-Chairs appointment process

One City Boards are co-chaired by a Bristol City Council Policy Committee Chair (*unless statutory) linked to the relevant portfolio and an external city partner. Following an expression of interest process, the external organisation Board co-chair will be nominated by the current political administration.

The Economy and Skills Board external co-chairs appointed for a term of 18 months and reappointed, if agreed by both parties, once term ends.

5.2 The Co-Chairs of the Economy and Skills Board will:

1. Communicate Economy and Skills Board priorities and develop the Board as an effective local partnership that delivers on One City shared priorities.
2. Speak on behalf of the Economy and Skills Board.
3. Represent the Economy and Skills Board at meetings, conferences, and seminars.
4. Chair Economy and Skills Board meetings, creating an environment where all members can make a full contribution to the Economy and Skills Board.
5. Develop and maintain a constructive relationship with all the sectors represented on the Economy and Skills Board.
6. Promote sustainable development, equalities and community cohesion, and 'closing the gap' in all the Economy and Skills Board does.

6. Conduct of Business

6.1 Cadence of meetings

Board meetings will take place quarterly (this can be reviewed according to necessity) with meetings aligned wherever possible with One City meetings, for example feeding in to the twice-annual City Gatherings.

There is an expectation that Board members will prioritise attendance. If a member is unable to attend the meeting, they should nominate a substitute. This substitute should have delegated authority to make the same level of decision as the member they are representing.

Invitations may be extended to non-Board members, where their input or advice supports the discussion taking place at the meeting. Advisors with specific expertise may be invited to meetings as required.

If a member misses three consecutive meetings, the Economy and Skills Board will ask the member's organisation or sector to nominate another representative. If the organisation is unable to nominate a representative, the Economy and Skills Board will seek to invite a representative of another organisation from the same sector.

6.2 Meeting location

Board meetings can be held online or in person (following the latest Public Health COVID-19 advice for group gatherings).

6.3 Details of who will provide management and administration of the Board

The Board Support Officer will lead the One City Board with co-chairs, support One City Boards and Task & Finish Groups to plan and delivery successful One City Plan goals and ensure delivery of Board's work programme. They will oversee the Board's administrative function. See annex 1 for Board Support Officer role description and functions.

The City Office will provide administrative support for the Economy and Skills Board on an ongoing basis, subject to appropriate resourcing for this being available. See Annex 2 for City Office role and description and functions.

7. Code of Conduct for meetings of the Board

There is no formal Code of Conduct for Board Members on the assumption that those involved will work professionally and co-operatively in the spirit of the One City Approach. However, a code of conduct may be developed if at any point one should be deemed necessary. Currently, in its place, we have laid out a set of anticipated behaviours from Board Members.

Members of the Economy and Skills Board are encouraged to:

- Work with other members to achieve consensus in addressing the aspirations, needs, and priorities of the city and its communities, and in promoting economic, social, and environmental well-being.
- Always consider the overall best interests of the city.
- Raise areas of concern and contribute experience and expertise to Economy and Skills Board discussions to achieve good, workable solutions that are based on an assessment of need and are likely to receive widespread support.
- Speak with authority on behalf of their organisation/interest group at Economy and Skills Board meetings and exert influence on behalf of the Economy and Skills Board within their organisation/interest group.
- Display consistency and honesty in achieving consensus through debate.
- Respect the views of other members.
- Respectfully challenge the opinions or actions of other members or contributors where this will lead to an improvement for the city and support other members in the process of change.
- Always consider the contribution their organisation or sector can make to achieving the Economy and Skills Board aims and objectives.

8. Declaration of Interest

A Partner must regard themselves as having an interest in any matter if a decision upon it might be regarded as affecting the financial position of the Partner, a relative or a friend, or of the organisation the partner has an association with, either as an employee, volunteer or manager. Such interests will be declared and noted at the commencement of the item to be discussed or

when the interest becomes apparent. The Chair may ask the Partner to withdraw from the meeting room whilst the matter is being considered at the meeting.

9. Decision-making

The Board has no formal decision-making power for the use of public resources. However, City Partners including Bristol City Council and the City Office may take recommendations from the Board, with the Board playing a key role, amongst other partners, in influencing strategic decision making in the city around housing and communities. In the event of recommendations being made these will be captured in the actions notes for the Board and made available on the One City website. Any recommendations to the council should be included within any decision-making documents (e.g. as an appendix to Policy Committee Reports)

Wherever possible, any Economy and Skills Board decisions regarding their work programme, recommendations or operations should be made by consensus as reached through open debate and discussion. In circumstances where a formal vote is necessary, a majority decision and a quorum will be required. In the event of a tie, the chair of that meeting will hold a casting vote.

10. Accountability of the Board to One City

The Board sits within the wider One City Structure, which includes the City Office, the One City Partners Group (formally City Leaders) and the One City Governance Board.

The One City Governance Board will oversee the work of the City Office which includes delivery of the One City Plan and One City Strategies. Reports against the progress of the One City Goals will therefore be made by the Boards (through the Support Officers and City Office) on a regular basis to the Governing Board.

The Governance Board will also act as an escalation point for the City Office. Should there be issues of delivery or Governance or operational or strategic issues with the Boards, these may be escalated to the Governance Board for advice and guidance.

At the annual One City Plan Refresh City Gathering, the Board will provide an update on their work programme for the year and their delivery against the goals as well as presenting their annual revisions to the One City Plan.

The City Office may share arising matters with the Board as feels appropriate and similarly arising issues that would benefit escalation to this group from the Board will be shared via the City office.

The Board's annual work programme will be shared across the wider One City structure and wider partners (e.g., Equalities Forums) will be supported to participate in task and finish groups that will act as the prime delivery forum for the Goals and Strategies.

11. Performance Management

Annually the Economy and Skills Board will review progress against its work programme and relevant metrics. These will be developed in consultation with Board members, BSO, City Office and

T&F Groups. The work programme will be publicly available at One City website and will feed into the annual One City progress report.

The Board will also report its progress to the One City Governance Board, as set out above.

All goals put forward by the Boards for the One City Plan must include metrics for measuring success which will then form part of the annual report of the City Office.

12. Financial Arrangements

There is no official budget or funding for the Board and City Office is not a funding mechanism. Task and Finish Groups may be eligible for funding through grant applications, partner contributions or funding bids to deliver agreed projects.

13. Internal and External Audit Arrangements

Any activity linked to BCC can be audited. Public authorities are required to disclose information that they hold upon request, subject to the provisions of the relevant legislation (Freedom of Information Act 2000 'FOIA' /Environmental Information Regulations 2004 'EIR'), which permit certain types of information to be withheld.

The Council has decided to adopt the approach that the Economy and Skills Board is subject to FOIA/EIR. It is thought probable that the Information Commissioner's Office ('ICO') would reach this view, if ever required to decide, but that it would be sensible to adopt this position from the outset for purposes of both transparency and uniformity. It is proposed that the Council will co-ordinate responses to requests. Requests may well come to the Council in the first instance anyway, but if you do receive a request, please send it to complaints.feedback@bristol.gov.uk.

14. Complaint's procedure

All complaints will be dealt with in the first instance by the City Office in partnership with the Board Chairs and will follow the same procedures as Bristol City Council currently follows.

If the complaint is about the City Office, this will be routed through the Council's complaints process as the host for the City Office.

In the event the complaint is about one of the Board Chairs this will be overseen by the other co-chair and the City Office. If about both Co-Chairs this will follow the council's complaints procedures as it would relate to a council official.

It should be noted however that the council has no jurisdiction over Board members, who are volunteers from other organisations, and therefore issues with non-council members would be dealt with informally unless they warrant engagement with the member's organisation due to the severity of the matter.

15. Conflict Resolution

Conflict resolution is to be managed by the Board Co-chairs and supported by the City Office.

16. Information Sharing

The Board must comply with any legislative requirements to safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of all personal information with e.g., the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

16.1 Member responsibility for sensitive data

Where appropriate members of the public will be able to attend Board meetings in an observer capacity. Observers are expected to follow the same code of conduct as Board members but will not be able to participate in Board discussions. Requests should be directed to the City Office Team at city.office@bristol.gov.uk and will be considered on a case-to-case basis based on the content to be discussed.

The Board will regularly publish brief minutes and action notes from its meetings. At times the Board may flag items as confidential, and these shall remain so unless and until agreed otherwise. Members will take all reasonable steps to maintain the confidentiality of any information of a personal nature, or of any information relating to the financial or business affairs of other persons or that which is commercially sensitive, which comes into their possession or knowledge, arising out of their membership of any the work of the Economy and Skills Board and/or related bodies.

17. Equality and Diversity

The Board will recognise and encourage the valuable and enriching contribution that people from all backgrounds and experiences bring to the city and will strive to make membership of the Board reflective of the city. All individuals should be treated on the basis of merit and without prejudice. The Board, therefore, aims to actively promote equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination on grounds of age, cultural background, class, disability, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, faith, part-time worker, language, union activity, and an individual's health status.

We will strive vigorously to remove conditions which place Board members at a disadvantage and will actively challenge bigotry and discrimination. We encourage Chief Executives and senior leaders to consider the ways in which they can support the Board's equality and diversity aims and enable a broad range of voices by offering their place to their deputies, particularly those with protected characteristics, and delegating decision-making powers to these individuals in such cases.

18. Communications and Engagement

The City Office will oversee communication to engage citizens and partners in priorities agreed by the Board. Board members are encouraged to disseminate communications and encourage engagement within their areas of influence and through their organisational communications channels.

Any requests from the media for either information or comment should be directed to the co-chairing Councillor. Board members are free to comment themselves upon Board matters should

they so wish; however, it should be made clear that they are commenting in their personal capacity, should they choose to do so.

19. Review

The Board will keep the purpose of its work, priorities for action, and governance structure under regular review. Terms of Reference will be reviewed and agreed every 18 months.

20. Access to information about the Board

The Economy and Skills Board work programme, together with the list of members and agendas for all meetings will be available at [Bristol One City](#) on the Economy and Skills Board theme webpage. A summary of the discussion, key recommendations and / or conclusions will also be provided after each meeting.

Strategies and any other supporting documents will also be available on the website.

