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Date: 27<sup>th</sup> January 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Cabinet – 29<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

I refer to **Agenda Item 13: Any Other Items** and attach the **Regeneration Projects Update (Page 2)** report that will be considered at Cabinet on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

In addition I attach **Item 6: Local Government Devolution Update (Page 9)** report that was marked to follow on the agenda.

Yours faithfully,

Tom Shardlow

Chief Executive

To: Members of the Cabinet

Councillor C. Watkins (Leader of the Council and Housing)  
Councillor J. Sheppard (Deputy Leader and Environment and Public Services)  
Councillor S. Hey (Resources and Public Services)  
Councillor T. Jenkins (Leisure, Communities and Health)  
Councillor N. King (Business and Regeneration)  
Councillor R. Roze (Planning and Enforcement)

Observer

Councillor K. Wilson (Leader of the Main Opposition Party)

**Cabinet/Individual Cabinet Member Decision**

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**Report Summary Sheet**

**Date: 29<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

**Subject: Regeneration Projects Update**

**Portfolio: Business and Regeneration**

**From: Maria Bailey- Strategic Director for Place and economy**

**Summary:** To update members on the progress of regeneration projects taking place within the Borough.

**Recommendations:**

That the content of the report be noted

That delegated authority be given to the Strategic Director for Place and Economy, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, and in consideration of commercial or market forces, to finalise the outputs of the programme, and manage all associated contractual matters, up to agreed budget levels.

That the report be marked not for call in as provided for in paragraph 15(f) of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules in Part 4 of the Constitution due to the timeframes in meeting construction deadlines.

**Options:**

To approve or reject

**Reasons:**

To ensure the effective delivery of publicly funded projects

**Consultation undertaken with Members/Officers/Stakeholders**

Leader of The Council  
Strategic Directors

**Subject to call-in:**

No

**Ward relevance:**

All

**Forward plan:**

Yes

**Building a Better Borough Aim:**

Aim 3 - VISIT

**Building a Better Borough Priority:**

Priority 1: Create vibrant and diverse Town Centres

**Relevant statutes or policy:**

**None**

**Equalities Implications:**

All projects being completed taking account of all equality legislation required

**Human resources implications:**

None

**Financial implications:**

As per agreed budget

**Health Inequalities Implications:**

None

**Section 17 Crime & Disorder Implications:**

None

**Risk management implications:**

Each project has individual risk management assessments

**Environmental implications:**

All projects take account of relevant environmental legislation.

**Legal implications:**

None

**Contact details:**

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## **AGENDA ITEM NO. 13**

### **NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**Report to:** Cabinet

**From:** Strategic Director for Place & Economy

**Subject:** Regeneration Projects Update

**Portfolio:** Business and Regeneration

**Building a Better Borough Aim:** Aim 3 - VISIT

**Building a Better Borough Priority:** Priority 1: Create vibrant and diverse  
Town Centres

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1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To update members on the progress of regeneration projects taking place within the Borough.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the content of the report be noted

2.2 That delegated authority be given to the Strategic Director for Place and Economy, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, and in consideration of commercial or market forces, to finalise the outputs of the programme, and manage all associated contractual matters, up to agreed budget levels.

2.3 That the report be marked not for call in as provided for in paragraph 15(f) of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules in Part 4 of the Constitution due to the timeframes in meeting construction deadlines.

3. Body of Report

**Town Centre Development- Project Updates**

**1. Bridge to Living**

- Proposal to demolish existing site, create a walkway connecting Riversley Park and offer a mixed-use development.

- Disconnected utilities and continue vacating the properties and relocating tenants along Bridge Street/Church Street. There is one unit left, and we are working with the tenant to find suitable relocation.
- Progressing with procurement exercise for demolition and submit application to planning.
- Next Steps: Viability/value engineering assessment to explore delivery options.

## **2. Bedworth Physical Activity Hub**

- New state of the art leisure centre
- Temporary footpaths in place and open throughout park.
- Hoarding in place around construction area
- BAM taken ownership of build site – initial groundwork, sheet piling and concrete completed. Steel frames are being installed and works are progressing well
- All weather pitch contractor secured.
- The new toucan crossing point works and breakthrough into MWP scheduled to commence on 17 February, subject to permit approval.
- Leisure operator procurement live in the market. NBBC assessing information provided and ensuring clarity across all submissions for future assessment/decision making.
- PR planned for 14 March 2025 for “bolting out” event, with key funding partners.

## **3. E-Mobility Hub**

- EV charging points, enough to charge 20 vehicles on Abbey Street, and Church Street. The 15kw EV charging points are intended for top up charging for people visiting the town centre during the day.
- Procurement options and partners being considered

#### **4. Grayson Place**

- Comprises of a Hampton by Hilton hotel and development of NWSL college campus, food hall, leisure box and surface level car park.
- Phase 1- Hotel development complete/operational (10/09/2024).
- Phase 2- steel frames and upper floor has been installed of the college building and agreement to internal configuration being completed. Works progressing on the leisure box and food hall.

#### **5. George Eliot Visitor Centre**

- The outbuilding, which is currently in a state of disrepair, will be carefully deconstructed and rebuilt to modern building regulations to enable the formation of an exhibition and sales area.
- Planning approval submitted 9/2/24.
- Objections have been received will need to go to Planning Committee/Secretary of State.
- Whitbread's selling restaurant to M&B – confirmation received this will not impact this project.

#### **6. Parks Revival Scheme**

- To improve the attractiveness and utility of Riversley Park in Nuneaton by improving event spaces, active travel routes and the general appearance of this facility.
- Proceeding with consultant appointment and progression to next stage (RIBA 3 and beyond) of design development and subsequent contractor procurement.

#### **7. The Saints Project**

- The purchase and restoration of this local heritage building will deliver a new training and enterprise space, along with four incubation units and new community space.
- Building purchase completed. Ground floor has been completed. Entered into PCSA with Mayway to refurbish first floor. JCT design and build – agreed and signed.
- Works on site commenced and progressing in accordance with the programme.

- Lease close to completion.

#### **8. Bedworth Market Refurbishment**

- To make improvements to the interior and exterior of Bedworth Market
- Contractor procured to complete PCSA agreement for design and construction works.
- Awaiting final costed design works
- Works to start March 2025

#### 4. Conclusion

One of regular updates to be provide to Cabinet on these projects.

#### 5. Appendices

None

#### 6. Background Papers (if none, state none)

None



**Cabinet/Individual Cabinet Member Decision**

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**Report Summary Sheet**

**Date: 29<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

**Subject: Local Government Devolution**

**Portfolio: Leader**

**From: Chief Executive Officer**

**Summary:**

To brief Cabinet on the English Devolution White Paper: Power and partnership: Foundations for growth, published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on 16 December 2024.

To highlight the subsequent implications for Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough, the Council and the administration of local government services within Warwickshire.

To detail the activity undertaken by Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council in relation to the White Paper.

To detail potential next steps for Cabinet to duly consider.

**Recommendations:**

That the contents of the report are noted.

That delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive Officer, following consultation with the Leader to continue to work with HM Government, Consultants, Industry bodies, Local Stakeholders, and neighbouring Local Authorities to represent

the interests of Nuneaton and Bedworth, and to explore and negotiate options for the borough.

That delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive Officer, following consultation with the portfolio holder for Resources & Customer Services to review Nuneaton and Bedworth Council's employment terms and conditions, against neighbouring authorities, to manage staff retention.

That Cabinet consider whether the concept of Local Government Devolution and Reorganisation should be debated at Council, and whether a single 'Council' view can be formed for Nuneaton and Bedworth.

**Options:**

To approve the recommendations and undertake actions detailed.

To take another course of action, as determined by Cabinet.

**Reasons:**

To ensure that Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council, engages in the Governments Reform and Devolution agenda, ensuring the best outcome for the residents of the borough and Warwickshire.

**Consultation undertaken with Members/Officers/Stakeholders**

Leader of The Council  
Strategic Directors  
Cabinet

**Subject to call-in:**

Yes

**Ward relevance:**

All

**Forward plan:**

Yes

**Building a Better Borough Aim:**

All

**Building a Better Borough Priority:**

All

**Relevant statutes or policy:**

English Devolution White Paper: Power and partnership: Foundations for growth, published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on 16 December 2024

**Equalities Implications:**

This specific decision does not have any equalities implications, however the provision of the local government services going forward has a clear link to future outcomes for borough residents.

**Human resources implications:**

This specific decision does not have any human resource implications, however the provision of the local government services going forward, has a clear link to future outcomes the employees of the Council.

Local Government reorganisation is likely to result in significant human resource implications. This will be communicated and managed as details become known.

**Financial implications:**

This specific decision does not have any financial implications, however the provision of the local government services going forward, has a profound effect on local government financing going forward.

Financial implications will be a significant factor when outcomes are determined.

Council may wish to consider making an ear marked reserve provision for forthcoming financial years, in the next budget cycle, to ensure that any consultancy work can be funded.

**Health Inequalities Implications:**

This specific decision does not have any health equalities implications, however the provision of the local government services going forward, has a clear link to future outcomes for borough residents.

**Section 17 Crime & Disorder Implications:**

This specific decision does not have any crime and disorder implications, however the provision of the local government services going forward, has a clear link to future outcomes for borough residents.

**Risk management implications:**

Risk management will be managed as required at the appropriate time.

**Environmental implications:**

This specific decision does not have any environmental implications, however the provision of the local government services going forward, has a clear link to the future activity of the organisation and associated environmental externality.

**Legal implications:**

None

**Contact details:**

**Tom Shardlow** [Tom.shardlow@nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk](mailto:Tom.shardlow@nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk)

**NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**Report to:** Cabinet - 29 January 2025

**From:** Chief Executive Officer

**Subject:** Local Government Devolution

**Portfolio:** Leader of the Council

**Building a Better Borough Aim:** All

**Building a Better Borough Priority:** All

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1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To brief Cabinet on the *English Devolution White Paper: Power and partnership: Foundations for growth*, published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on 16 December 2024.
- 1.2. To highlight the subsequent implications for Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough, the Council and the administration of local government services within Warwickshire.
- 1.3. To detail the activity undertaken by Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council in relation to the White Paper.
- 1.4. To detail potential next steps for Cabinet to duly consider.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That the contents of the report are noted.
- 2.2. That delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive Officer, following consultation with the Leader to continue to work with HM Government, Consultants, Industry bodies, Local Stakeholders, and neighbouring Local Authorities to represent the interests of Nuneaton and Bedworth, and to explore and negotiate options for the borough.
- 2.3. That delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive Officer, following consultation with the portfolio holder for Resources & Customer Services to review Nuneaton and Bedworth Council's employment terms and conditions, against neighbouring authorities, to manage staff retention.

- 2.4. That Cabinet consider whether the concept of Local Government Devolution and Reorganisation should be debated at Council, and whether a single 'Council' view can be formed for Nuneaton and Bedworth.

### 3. Body of Report

- 3.1. Local Government in Warwickshire is currently provided on a multi-tiered basis. The majority of Local Government services are delivered by either Warwickshire County Council (upper tier – Education, Social Care, Highways etc.) and Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council (lower tier – Local Taxation, Housing, Homelessness, Environmental Services, Waste Collections etc). In other areas of Warwickshire, services are also provided by Town and Parish Councils, which typically include very local services such as parks, grounds maintenance, town centre management and civic duties.
- 3.2. Furthermore, both Warwickshire County Council and the Districts and Boroughs are non-constituent members of the West Midlands Combined Authority.
- 3.3. On the 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government published the *English Devolution White Paper: Power and partnership: Foundations for growth*.
- 3.4. The paper set out a clear Government ambition to devolve powers to local government and to abolish multi-tiered local government delivery, through the unitarisation of Local Government.
- 3.5. The paper required all areas of local government to work together locally to explore options for their areas. The specific objectives included:
- The need for the whole country to be covered by strategic authorities. These are large areas of local government, which are made of up constituent members. The West Midlands Combined Authority is an example of a strategic authority.
  - The need for multi-tiered areas to come together to form unitary councils with a larger population and geography. A population level of 500,000 for each local authority has been given as a guide, though it is understood that there may be exception to this.
- 3.6. Furthermore, Government asked for expressions of interest from upper tier councils (County Council's) to take part in a priority programme to either unlock devolution or undertake local government reform to enable it. A deadline of the 10<sup>th</sup> January 2025 was given by Government to express this interest.

- 3.7. Government stated that they would write further to all multi-tiered areas in January 2025 to invite proposals for Local Government delivery in their areas.
- 3.8. Warwickshire County Council has expressed interest in being part of the priority programme, which proposes to deliver a single Warwickshire Unitary Council, under the Strategic Authority of the West Midlands Combined Authority. Should this be successful then the County Elections in 2025 would be postponed.
- 3.9. In contrast Leaders of Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council, Stratford-on-Avon District Council, Warwick District Council, and North Warwickshire Borough Council wrote to Government to request that Warwickshire does not enter the priority programme, as to afford more time to explore options for Warwickshire. It has been made known that districts and borough councils are neither against the principle of devolution or local government reform, but in compliment, seek more time to properly work through the various options, to secure the right outcome for the residents of Warwickshire.
- 3.10. It is understood that the Leader of Rugby Borough Council has expressed initial support for a single County Warwickshire, but it is hoped that all Local Government organisations in Warwickshire can work together in the next phase to determine outcomes.
- 3.11. The Council now awaits the outcome of this request in order to plan its next steps. It is the intention of Council Officers to work with their counterparts across local government to draw out an appraisal of the options available.
- 3.12. Cabinet (and subsequently Council) may wish to consider whether this matter warrants debate and vote, to form a single view of the Council, to help shape the direction of negotiations.
- 3.13. Furthermore, in due course, the borough will need to consider whether the creation of Parish and or Town Councils, are appropriate for regions of the borough.
- 3.14. A final consideration is the impact on the Human Resources of the Council. Should Warwickshire County Council's request be successful then NBBC will quickly be required to work towards its dissolution by 2027 or 2028. Government have made it clear that they expect this work to be completed in this Parliament.
- 3.15. This will require both additional resources to ensure that appropriate cost of change can be undertaken but furthermore may also create staff retention and recruitment issues, as employees seek to shore up

their personal positions. A review of matters such as notice periods, redundancy etc, may be required to ensure that the Council can continue to operate during this period.

- 3.16. Any significant changes to employee's terms and conditions would have to be approved by either Cabinet, Council or the Officer Remuneration Panel, as the Council's employment procedure rules set out at part 4H of the Council's Constitution.

#### 4. Conclusion

- 4.1. The English Devolution White Paper: Power and partnership: Foundations for growth sets the touch paper alight for the biggest change in Local Government locally since 1972, following the merger of Bedworth Urban District and Nuneaton Metropolitan Borough.
- 4.2. The Government timelines are relatively short, and on this basis, it is of vital importance that the appropriate resources of the Council are made available to work through this process, securing the best possible outcome for the borough and Warwickshire.

#### 6. Appendices

None

#### 7. Background Papers (if none, state none)

English Devolution White Paper: Power and partnership: Foundations for growth

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government  
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[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/676028c9cfbf84c3b2bcfa57/English\\_Devolution\\_White\\_Paper\\_Web\\_Accessible.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/676028c9cfbf84c3b2bcfa57/English_Devolution_White_Paper_Web_Accessible.pdf)