

NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

BUSINESS, REGENERATION AND PLANNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

6th February 2025

A meeting of the Business, Regeneration and Planning Overview & Scrutiny Panel was held on Thursday, 6th February 2025 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall Nuneaton.

Present

Councillor P. Hickling (Chair)

Councillors: D. Brown, S. Dhillon, M. Etienne, B. Saru, C. Smith, R. Smith, M. Bird (substitute for J. Clarke) and B. Hancox (substitute for A. Bull).

Apologies: Councillors A. Bull and J. Clarke (Vice-Chair).

PART I – PUBLIC BUSINESS

BRP 16 Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Business, Regeneration and Planning Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 17th October 2024 be approved and duly signed by the Chairman.

BRP 17 Declarations of Interest

As Councillors M. Bird and B. Hancox were substitute Councillors for this meeting, their Declarations of Interest were not detailed in the Schedule attached to the agenda, but are available on the Council website.

Councillor B. Hancox also declared that in relation to agenda item BRP 19, he is a Governor of the Nicholas Chamberlain Trust, and his grandson plays rugby for the local Junior Rugby Team.

RESOLVED that the Declarations of Interest are as set out in the Schedule attached to these minutes, with the addition of the Declarations of Interest for Councillors M. Bird and B. Hancox.

BRP 18 Questions to Cabinet

The Portfolio Holder for Business and Regeneration (Councillor N. King) and the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Enforcement (Councillor R. Roze) were in attendance at the meeting. There were no questions asked.

BRP 19 S106 Monies Received and Spent

A report of the Assistant Director – Planning gave the Panel an opportunity to scrutinise the effectiveness of the Council's use of monies included in planning application S106 contributions (including the effectiveness, monitoring arrangements and spending of S106 monies).

The Panel discussed and asked questions on the following:

- When monies are received for new estates (not as yet received for the Arbury application as too early in the process).

- Bus service contributions (go to County Council) – contributions can include extending services, new bus stops, frequency of service etc.
- S106 monies are monitored to ensure money is spent in a timely manner and not reclaimed by developers.
- S106 monies from developments on the periphery of the Borough will go the Council where the development is, NBBC cannot request a proportion, but Highways and other agencies can benefit.
- Monies coming in are larger than money spent – as invoices are triggered at certain points of a development and NBBC have five years to spend money.
- Officers agreed to look into providing back data and a timeline of monies coming in and out (including any money expired and sent back to developer).
- There are now more staff being trained in S106 Monitoring at NBBC.
- Members were advised to email any specific questions to Officers for responses.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be considered and noted.

BRP 20 Integrated Performance Report – Second Quarter 2024-25

A report of the Risk Management and Performance Officer provided Panel Members with appropriate performance measures, budget information and risk data for service areas within the scope of the Panel. The report has been adapted to reduce the volume of data (as previously reported under the former scrutiny panel arrangements), whilst still providing the Panel with sufficient information to monitor results to address issues arising.

The Panel discussed and asked questions on the following:

- Processing new benefits claims – there has been a high turnover of staff and training is taking place to cover training needs alongside trying to reduce backlogs. It was agreed that this need to be monitored.
- Business Rates Collection – virtually back on track now which Members were pleased to hear.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be considered and noted.

BRP 21 Town Centre Updates

A report of the Assistant Director – Economy and Regeneration provided the Panel with an update on the performance within the town centres, looking at footfall figures, market stalls hired and car parking revenue.

The Panel discussed and asked questions on the following:

- Footfall – reduction causes include the closure of certain retail shops, different ways of shopping (online/out of town), national trends, lack of food and beverage options, lack of residential properties in the town centres and car parking options.

- Hilton Hotel – ensuring they are competitive and have a growing business and impact on Nuneaton.
- Questions around the usage of the hotel, including the reason people stay and where they are going, if there is an increase in people using the town centre and occupancy rates
- Despite drop in footfall, car parking figures are resilient which shows people are still coming into town – possibly for leisure and work.
- Looking to increase offerings for families and repurposing the town centres. This was identified early and so regeneration is being planned accordingly.
- New car parking data will help identify how and when people use the towns.
- Need to monitor if people walk into town and use public transport, and how to encourage this.
- Markets can impact footfall, perhaps consideration should be given to a dedicated Town Centre/Market Manager.
- Markets – reduction over winter and national decline in the use of markets. Suggestions to improve the markets included street food offerings, using empty properties in colder months, matching expectations of what people now want to buy from markets – buying habits have changed.
- Publicity – more positive stories in the press.

RESOLVED that

- a) the contents of the report be considered and noted; and
- b) a report on the Hilton Hotel (including occupancy rates) be brought to a future meeting.

BRP 22 Business Improvement District (BID) Update

A report of the Assistant Director – Economy and Regeneration provided the Panel with an update on the Nuneaton Business Improvement District (BID).

The Panel discussed and asked questions on the following:

- There is a Board who hold regular meetings, and a new BID Manager is starting within the next few weeks.
- The Assistant Director – Economy and Regeneration and other Officers attend the meetings.
- Monitor – will the BID in Nuneaton take footfall from Bedworth. To look at a Bedworth BID if possible.
- BID levy – all those in the area that benefit contribute a percentage (except smaller companies).

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be considered and noted.

BRP 23 Council Owned Commercial Properties

The Assistant Director – Economy and Regeneration, presented a report which provided the Panel with an update on the Councils commercial property lettings.

The Panel discussed and asked questions on the following:

- Properties being clarified whether for leasing or selling.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be considered and noted.

BRP 24 **Public Question and Response Discussed at Council on 11th December 2024**

Members had been given the opportunity to review the question and response discussed at Council on 11th December 2024 relating to the decisions by the Integrated Care Board.

RESOLVED that a briefing note on the situation be requested from the Integrated Care Board and shared with Panel Members.

BRP 25 **Forward Plan**

The Forward Plan showing the key decisions that will be made in the four months commencing 1st February 2025, was provided to the Panel for information.

RESOLVED that the Forward Plan be noted.

BRP 26 **Work Programme 2024-2025**

The Panel were presented with the Work Programme for the municipal year 2024-2025.

RESOLVED that

- a) the 2024-2025 work programme be noted; and
- b) a report on the Hilton Hotel be brought to a future meeting.

Chair

**Business, Regeneration and Planning OSP –
Schedule of Declarations of Interests – 2024/2025**

	Name of Councillor	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest	Other Personal Interest	Dispensation
	General dispensations granted to all members under s.33 of the Localism Act 2011			Granted to all members of the Council in the areas of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Housing matters - Statutory sick pay under Part XI of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992 - An allowance, payment given to members - An indemnity given to members - Any ceremonial honour given to members - Setting council tax or a precept under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 - Planning and Licensing matters - Allotments - Local Enterprise Partnership
	D. Brown	Employed by H.M Land Registry	-Regional Coordinator, Ragdoll Rescue Charity. -Trustee of the Exhall Education Foundation Charity	
	A. Bull	Employed by FedEx	The Labour Party (sponsorship) -CWU Trade Union Member Representative of the following Outside Bodies: Age UK (Warwickshire Branch)	
	J. Clarke	- Warwickshire County Councillor	Nuneaton Conservative Association - Treasurer Officer of the Abbey Preceptory Masonic Buildings - Nuneaton	
	S. Dhillon	Employed by UHCW NHS Trust	Member (Rep) at Unison – UHCW Trust Representative on the following Outside Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warwickshire Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee • Camp Hill Urban Village: Pride in Camp Hill Board • Committee of Management of Hartshill and Nuneaton Recreation Ground • George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust – Public/User Board • West Midlands Combined Authority Wellbeing Board 	
	M. Etienne	Employed by Network Rail	- Member of The Conservative Party and Nuneaton	

	Name of Councillor	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest	Other Personal Interest	Dispensation
			Conservative Association - RMT Member	
	P. Hickling	- Employed by Wyggeston and Queen Elizabeth I College (Teacher) - Pearson Education (Snr Examiner)	The Labour Party (sponsorship) - Member of The Labour Party (CLP and Secretary of Nuneaton West) - Member of National Education Union - Committee Member of Nuneaton Historical Association Representative on the following Outside Bodies: - Friendship Project for Children	
	B. Saru	- Director – Saru Embroidery Ltd - Co-founder and Owner – Fish Tale Ale Beer	- Labour Party (sponsorship) - Chair of the British Gurkha Veterans Association Representative on the following Outside Bodies: - Armed Forces Covenant	
	C. Smith	Software Engineer – Prophet PLC	- Member of Labour Party and Unite - Safeguarding – Manor Park RFC Representative on the following Outside Bodies: - Astley Charity	
	R. Smith		- Conservative Party Member - Chair of Trustees - Volunteer Friends, Bulkington; - Trustee of Bulkington Sports and Social Club. - Trustee of Bulkington Volunteers	