

## NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

### NUNEATON TOWN DEAL BOARD

8 December 2023

A meeting of the Town Deal Board was held on Friday 29 September 2023. The meeting was held at Nuneaton Museum, Riversley Park.

Present: Sean Farnell (CWLEP) – Chair, Alison Thompson, Councillor Jeff Clarke (WCC), Jet Jones, Les Ratcliffe, Lindsey Randle, Councillor Richard Smith (NBBC), Catherine Marks (WCC)

Officers in attendance: Ian Andrews (NBBC), Jo Pierson (NBBC) – Mins, Sandy Johal (NBBC), Tom Shardlow (NBBC)

Apologies: Stuart Noss (KEGS), Dr. Julie Nugent (WMCA), Marion Plant (NWSLC), Councillor Chris Watkins (NBBC), Councillor Clare Golby (NBBC), Jenni Northcote (GEH), Councillor Peter Butlin (WCC), Tony O’Callaghan, Amanda Bourne, Marcus Jones MP, Councillor Kris Wilson (NBBC)

#### TDB193 Chair’s welcome and announcements

The Chair welcomed Board members to the meeting.

#### TDB194 Minutes

Item TDB189 – Highlight Report - Wheat Street – “gone through process audit”, should say “gone through road safety audit”.

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 September 2023, were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

#### TDB195 Declarations of Interests

Board members’ interests for the meeting were as set out in a Schedule of Declarations of Interests, attached to the agenda.

Councillor Richard Smith’s – None.

#### TDB196 Simplification Pathfinder – presentation by Programme Manager

SJ gave a presentation which included details of what the pathfinder pilot is, NBBC has completed and submitted a light touch investment plan, what the governance would look like, board membership (assurance given that it is not an elected member led board, although member feedback is important) and a portfolio of the projects.

Questions/comments following presentation:

a) -SF - it provides a chance to reset the Board, will mean a slight change in the

constitution and an increased geography. However, wanted to review the members of the board anyway due to some non-attendance of some members.

**ACTION:** JP to send list of non-attendance over the last 12 months to SF.

- b) BPAH – small funding gap, applied to Sports England for additional funding.
- c) Board members have been identified in the ToR circulated prior to this meeting. It is important to ensure that local businesses are represented at these meetings.

**ACTION:** Current board members to provide feedback/comments on the ToR and whether the right people from their Dept are on the proposed new board by Friday 22 December 2023.

- d) TS informed that NBBC are doing a review of capital projects due to the inflation costs etc, report from consultants is due on 14 December, which will be followed by a report to Cabinet in January hopefully. SF stated should get a complete overview at our next meeting.

The ToR doesn't require approving at today's meeting. SJ has a meeting with DLUHC this afternoon and will be asking for an update on whether the Investment Plan has been accepted or not.

SF felt the "Simplification Pathfinder" was great news for the Borough, giving flexibility and brings all schemes under one roof, making feedback and decision making easier.

TDB197

#### Governance and Meeting Arrangements – Tom Shardlow (NBBC)

Councillor Kris Wilson has made a request that the timings of these meeting be reconsidered. NBBC's meetings are generally held in the evening, and he would like this Board to meet at the same time. SF has provided his view already via email, wanted to open it up to the wider board members.

A discussion took place. A lot of Councillors can't make day-time meetings due to work commitments. The only viable evening meeting due to MPs other commitments, along with the Chair would be a Friday evening. It was generally felt that this was unsuitable.

Virtual/hybrid meetings were discussed, but it is believed that constitutionally these can't take place.

Friday lunchtime, early morning or early evening meetings (16.00 pm) were considered.

A vote was taken: 1 in favour of evening meetings; 6 in favour of lunchtime.

**ACTION:** TS to feedback the above to Councillor Kris Wilson

TDB198

Highlight Report

The Regeneration Programme Manager (NBBC) submitted a Highlight Report (which had been circulated prior to the meeting) to update Board members on the status of the Towns Fund programme and individual projects. The report detailed the overall Towns Fund programme financial status, the key risks and upcoming activities.

The costs for the projects have increased due to inflation, borrowing costs, etc. Therefore, all projects are being reviewed by an external consultant and the S151 Officer to see what projects can afford internally. As previously stated, we will receive the report on 14 December, take to Cabinet in January 2023.

- Digital Skills – SF spoke to Marion Plant about the completion date of Q1 2025 – she was unaware the date had changed from Q2 2024. Need to be mindful of communicating changes at all stages between project leads and board members.  
*Post meeting note: Meetings have been taking place between Queensbury/NBBC and the College giving updates on timescales, etc.*
- George Eliot VC - New architect engaged, working on preferred option, reapply for Planning permission in new year. Timelines have moved, however it's not a big project, confident will spend funding in the timeframe. Anticipated completion October 2024.
- Saints - First floor refurb works – PCSA tender received no returns, agreed to direct award. Funding won't move over to Saints, NBBC would be invoiced for the cost of the works. JJ working with Newdigate Builders who seem keen to put a quote in for the works, deadline 11 December 2023.

SF declared an interest – he has a client who works in construction, specifically churches. Will pass details to JJ.

JJ informed there has been an issue with lease being signed by NBBC, delay since April 2023. This has a knock-on effect on budgets, once the lease is signed Saints receive the income from the flats above, currently budget down by £21,000, although has been promised this will be backdated, however not sure the correct amount has been invoiced for. Have people who are desperate for homes but can't do anything until the lease is signed. The lease not being signed is having a big impact on medium size charity income.

TS informed that SF had raised this last week at Chairs briefing. TS has spoken to NBBC's solicitors and Land and Property team, he will chase it again. Requested JJ includes him in any concerns going forward. TS had

been assured contact had been made to JJ's solicitor, JJ stated it was just to see what was outstanding. SF asked to be kept informed as well, feels communication is falling down here as well.

JJ stated the first time she gets to see the Highlight Dashboard is when it is circulated at these meetings. SJ will speak to Project lead to share beforehand.

**ACTION:** SF to pass contact details of contractor to JJ  
TS to chase signing of the Saints lease  
Highlight dashboard to be shared with project leads before meeting.

- SF wants direct feedback from Project Leads into the Board, really keen to have a presentation from a project at each meeting to get an update on project.

**ACTION:** SJ/JP to ensure this happens going forward.

- Museum/Parks - On pause until had review report back.
- Wheat Street - works commence Q2 25/26, works won't be carried out on network at same time as Corporation Street. Completion Q4 25/26
- Corporation Street - is programmed to take place before Wheat Street, completion Q1 25/26.
- Weddington Road - it has been confirmed from NBBC that this project would be paused, and the funding reallocated to one of our other projects. However, the decision needs to be formally ratified at Cabinet.
- E-mobility – units active by mid 2024. SF queried how many units there would be. SJ to confirm. *Post meeting note – Phase 1 – 7 EV points as part of hotel, Phase 2 – 33 EV points as part of multi-storey car park.*

TDB199 Any Other Business

LR (MIRA) – works with a lot of construction companies, can provide details if it will help.

TDB200 Exclusion of the Public and Press

Under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 9172, the public and press were excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items, it being likely that there would be disclosure of exempt information on the description specified in paragraph (iii) of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act.

**CONFIDENTIAL ITEM**

TDB201      Risk register

The Programme Manager (NBBC) submitted an updated Programme Risk Register. The Board considered the specific risks raised by the updated register.

Previous minutes stated include spend deadline as a risk, however already on at number 14.

JJ keeps getting calls from the press asking for updates on Saints. Not sure how to respond. Feels the project leads reputation should be included on the risk register.

IA is very happy to assist outside the meeting on how to respond to the press.

**ACTION:** SJ update number 9 on risk register.

Provide support to project leads on how to respond to the press.

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Chair of the Board