

NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

NUNEATON TOWN DEAL BOARD

29 September 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, Councillor Jeff Clarke (WCC), Marcus Jones MP, Alison Thompson, Marion Plant, Les Ratcliffe, Councillor Clare Golby (NBBC)

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

Apologies: Patricia Willoughby (leaving WMCA), Lindsey Randle, Dr. Julie Nugent (WMCA), Tony O’Callaghan, Jet Jones, Stuart Noss, Amanda Bourne, Councillor Chris Watkins (NBBC), Councillor Peter Butlin (WCC), Kerry Elkins, Councillor Kris Wilson (NBBC)

Tour of the Museum and project update was given by Catherine Nisbet. The Chair and board members expressed their thanks to Catherine.

TDB185 Chair’s welcome and announcements

The Chair welcomed Board members to the meeting.

TDB186 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 May 2023, were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

TDB187 Declarations of Interests

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

Updates were received from Councillor Clarke and Marcus Jones MP.

ACTION: Declarations of Interests to be updated.

TDB188 Simplification Pathfinder

Authorities who are in receipt of funding from all three funds ie Towns Fund, Future High Streets Fund and LUF, have been given the opportunity to take part in the Governments simplification pathfinder pilot project. NBBC has been selected as one of those authorities to take part. The scheme will allow monies up to £5M to be moved between projects without seeking approval, giving NBBC greater flexibility to manage the projects.

To take part, a draft Investment plan will be submitted to Government, which will come to the next board meeting once Government have approved it. The board will need to widen its stakeholders to encompass the other funding streams (Transforming Nuneaton, Transforming Bedworth, Bedworth Physical Activity Hub). The Terms or Reference are currently being looked at these will also be shared with the board.

Concerns were raised on the potential size of the new board. It was felt overall that it was a positive and a good opportunity. The board would like a presentation to cover all the projects that would sit under this new board and a graphic displaying where they all are.

There will need to be a process in place for moving monies around, however there is some guidance in a Technical document the government have provided.

ACTION: Investment plan, terms of reference project presentation at the next board meeting.

TDB189

Highlight Report

The Regeneration Programme Manager (NBBC) submitted a Highlight Report 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.

- Digital Skills – MP confirmed NW&SLC are awaiting a response from NBBC's solicitors regarding the lease.
- George Eliot VC - Issue with lease, the Trusts architect, who is retired, his insurance has lapsed. The Trust had a Board meeting this week and they have agreed to appoint a local architect from Coventry. Currently looking to see if they can use the previous plans or if they have to start from scratch.
- Saints - First floor refurb works – there were no returns to the tender process (contractors stated they had a lack of capacity). Two contractors have expressed an interest, they have been asked to submit a tender within the next week or so.
- Museum/Parks - on the stage to go out to procurement, however at the moment an internal review is taking place on all capital projects to see which may be sacrificed to save the critical projects. Bridge to Living is one of the critical projects and we are awaiting a decision on it. That project is linked to the Museum/Park project so there may be an impact. Take time now to ensure resources/finances are all in place as the project is still well within timelines to be delivered.
- Wheat Street - County are re-costing projects in light of the current climate. CM confirmed the project has gone through process audit and is progressing.
- Corporation Street - similar positive to above

- Weddington Road - gone through design phases, at next step of holding stakeholder workshop to get feedback.
- E-mobility - progressing well. BP pulse re-engaged with design element. Designated areas for EV charging points (multi-storey car park in Grayson Place).
- Visiting Nuneaton – the project has now been closed down.

A discussion took place around deadlines for spending the funding, whether the projects will meet those deadlines, what are the exit strategies, who will be accountable. Internal review of all projects taking place as stated above, along with continued close working with project leads and programme boards.

It was agreed that the risk register needs to capture the deadline dates.

Clarification is to be sought on whether it is just the funding that needs to be spent by the Government deadlines or the works completed.

ACTION: Update risk register to include spending deadlines. Clarification on funding/works completion deadlines (SJ)

TDB190

Any Other Business

- a) Press attending these meetings – a discussion took place, and it was agreed the press be invited once a review of all the projects has been completed.
- b) Communications – updating of My Town Nuneaton website has been paused until we have a clearer idea of where the projects are going. Will do a complete revamp once the Simplified Pathfinder pilot is in place.
- c) Date of Februarys 2024 meeting to be changed due to Chair and Vice Chair holidays.

ACTION: Press to be invited, all comms to be updated once pathfinder in place and date of above meeting to be changed.

TDB191

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

TDB192 Risk register

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

- Item 7 – capital costs – showing as amber – costs being refined - have a good procurement team and contingencies are in place.

There are three high yellows:

- Item 9 – reputation
- Item 12 – external events
- Item 16 – Contractor insolvency

A discussion took place around Item 16. Due diligence is carried out as part of the Councils procedures. The Board would like a statement/credit check carried out on the contractors doing the projects as some are involved in multiple projects.

ACTION: Board to be given some assurances around contractor insolvency.

Chair of the Board