

NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

SIMPLIFICATION PATHFINDER BOARD

7 June 2024

A meeting of the Simplification Pathfinder Board was held on Friday 7 June 2024. The meeting was held in Committee Room A, Town Hall.

Present: Sean Farnell (CWLEP) – Chair, Alison Thompson – WCAVA, Marcus Jones – MP, Stuart Noss (KEGS), Councillor Christopher Watkins (NBBC), Garry Palmer (WCC)

Officers in attendance: Jo Pierson (NBBC) - Mins, Jonathan White (NBBC), Kevin Hollis (NBBC) – presentation, Maria Bailey - (NBBC), Sandy Johal (NBBC)

Apologies: Jenni Northcote (GEH), Lindsey Randle (Mira), Marion Plant (NWSLC), Councillor Nicky King, Les Ratcliffe

SPB01: Site visit to the new Hilton by Hampton at Grayson Place took place.

SPB02: Chair's welcome and announcements

The Chair welcomed Board members to the meeting and introductions took place.

SPB03: Minutes

As this is the first meeting of the Simplification Pathfinder board, there are no previous minutes to agree. However, the minutes of the last Towns Deal Board meeting held on 8 December 2023, were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

SPB04: Declarations of Interests

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

SPB05: Bedworth Physical Activity Hub – presentation by KH.

KH gave a presentation:

- Bedworth Leisure centre built in 1974, has limited shelf life due to age. Most efficient option build new.
- LUF application submitted in June 2021, awarded £14.95m in October 2021 towards new build.
- Original LUF application submitted, upon initial RIBA 3 stage undertaken did not support increased construction / inflation costs within the industry.
- Revised scheme approved by NBBC Cabinet, working with Sport England to meet original aims / outcomes in applications submitted to LUF / Sport England.

- Sport England awarded initially £1.5m and increased to £2m to NBBC, towards delivery of new Active Design facility in Bedworth (Bedworth Physical Activity Hub).
- BPAH value engineered and reduced scheme to support agreed budget approved.
- NBBC Cabinet signed off new scheme and worked through RIBA stages and currently awaiting final contract sum from Construction contractor (BAM).
- NBBC approved as a Pathfinder Pilot with DLUHC and funds re-allocated based upon strategic need for capital projects.
- BPAH signed off by the Minister in March 2024 as part of the NBBC Pathfinder projects as to revised scheme and agreed new outcomes.
- Delivery of the new BPAH if agreed and within budget will be a phased approach ending in June / July 2026.
- Second element BPAH project was to deliver a new crossing point (toucan crossing) from Bedworth Town Centre to the Miners' Welfare Park. This is to commence in September 2024.
- Overall Project budget £30.6m agreed by Cabinet.

The following questions were raised:

CW – is anything being done with the roof space. KH confirmed looking at PV solar panels. They won't power the whole building, will have to have one gas boiler, however will be a lot more efficient than currently.

CW – there are no pictures of the oval area.
KH confirmed will be open grassed area with path around outside.

CW – queried the amphitheater – KH confirmed due to VE his has gone.

SF – if the path around the oval was hard standing and if the rest of paths around park were. KH confirmed that the full path network will be permanent tarmac.

SF – queried if you would still be able to walk around the edge of the mountain bike trail in the wooded area as currently you can. KH confirmed yes will be maintained as gravel – only new pathways will be tarmacked.

SPB06

Simplification Pathfinder – update from SJ

A summary of the pathfinder was presented to the former Towns Deal Board on 8 December 2023 in terms of what the Pathfinder is.

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council were approved (April 2024) on the Simplification Pathfinder, and as a result all the various Government funding pots (FHSF, LUF, TF) have been consolidated into one pot, which enables us to move funding between approved projects. This Board has now been established and the following projects are included in the Pathfinder:

- George Eliot Visitors Centre
- Digital Skills & Innovation Centre (DSIC)
- The Saints

- E-mobility Hub
- Parks Revival
- Bedworth Physical Activity Hub
- Grayson Place
- Bridge To Living

SPB07

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 Simplification Pathfinder programme and individual projects. The report detailed the overall Simplification Pathfinder programme financial status, the key risks and upcoming activities.

Queens road chambers – agreed to remove from report

Grayson Place– phase 1 is well underway, hotel progressing, revised completion date 14 June, opening August. The Council will be the hotel operator.

Phase 2 - looking at draft contract, finalising it with BAM. Revised programme – delivering food hall, college, cinema, public realm, surface level car park. Currently at pre-construction phase, anticipated completion date Q4 2025.

Phase 3 – in the pipeline, looking at potential future aspiration of MSCP, leisure box, residential element. Originally was part of Phase 2 but can't afford to do. We need to ensure there is the market demand.

DSIC – lease still to be agreed. College to confirm numbers around catering equipment required.

Aiming for completion and handover Q1 2025.

SF asked if the timescale was achievable – SJ confirmed at the moment yes.

GEVC – There have been some objections, and we are awaiting a date for this to go to Planning Committee.

Saints – Direct aware produced 1 tender from Mayway, however exceeded budget. Priority list reviewed to bring back within budget. Lease is currently with Saints solicitors – once signed will get a revised timeline.

Parks revival – Museum element not being delivered under Simplification Pathfinder (the toilets will be completed with S106 monies).

E-mobility – part of Grayson place – progressing well.

BPAH – update already given

BTL – missing from highlight report – SJ apologised. Intention to demolish buildings south side of Bridge Street, currently investigation residential/mixed used, with an open space through to link green corridor to park behind.

Current progress – WMCA have confirmed they will give us app £1.75m funding for scheme, which will help to narrow the funding gap to £950,000. A contractor is looking to take on as a development opportunity. Need to ensure there is market demand first.

For the Simplification Pathfinder, options analysis for viability and affordability was carried out and the following projects were removed and the funding moved to other projects. These were County led projects and may still happen:

Wheat Street junction
Corporation Street/Queens Road junction
Weddington Road cycle link

Timescales are a concern and deliverability for all projects.

SPB08

Any Other Business

- a) Declarations – will be circulated with minutes for review and update – please send any updates/additions back to JP by end of July 2024.
- b) Terms of Reference – these have been based on the Town Deal Board ToR as this board is the same requirements. They now included the geographical area of Bedworth and includes the BPAH project.
Chair confirmed he is happy with the ToR – if anyone has any issues they are to inform SF/SJ within 7 days, after which time these will be accepted and approved.

ACTION: any queries or comments on the ToR to be returned to SF/SJ.

SPD09

Exclusion of the Public and Press

Under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, 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

SPB10 Risk register

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

Red risks:

No 2 – Funding gap – helped mitigate by DLUHC approving us for Simplification Pathfinder and being able to reallocate funding between projects.

No 7 - Capital costs – costs going up – procurement plans were identified in business cases, we are actively looking for additional funding, finances are monitored, and have regular meetings with S151 Officer.

No comments/questions.

SPB11 Membership of Board – there is a broad membership, but weak attendance. SF proposed speaking to individuals that have missed meetings to see if they still want to be included, report this back to the Board and see what if we are missing representation from any areas.

GP stated that should have WCC Councillor representative for next meeting.

Chair of the Board