Nuneaton & Bedworth
United to Achieve

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Date: 5th July 2023

Our Ref: MM

Dear Sir/Madam,

Business, Regeneration and Planning Overview and Scrutiny Panel
Thursday, 6 July 2023

I refer to Item 8, 'Town Centre Update' on the Agenda for the Business, Regeneration and Planning Overview and Scrutiny Panel being held on Thursday, 6 July 2023, and attach a copy of the Town Centres Update Report previously marked 'to follow'.

Please note that this meeting will be taking place in the Council Chamber.

Yours faithfully,

BRENT DAVIS

Chief Executive

To: All Members of the Business, Regeneration and Planning Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Councillors J. Clarke (Chair), N. Phillips (Vice-Chair), C. Cape, J. Coventry-Moreton, M. Green, J. Hartshorn, G. Moreton, M. Walsh and M. Wright.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8

NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to: OSP BRP - 6th July 2023

From: Assistant Director – Economy

Subject: Town Centre Update

Portfolio: (Councillor K. Wilson)

Building a Better Borough Aim: Work

Building a Better Borough Priority: Grow a strong and inclusive economy

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1. Purpose of Report

1.1 Report on Q1 2023/24 town centre KPI's

2. Footfall

2.1 Nuneaton and Bedworth have had a footfall monitoring solution provided by GEO-Sense in both town centres since 2019. GEO-Sense provides anonymous information based on unique visitor numbers requiring no end user interaction.

2.2 The Geo-sense footfall figures indicate that footfall for Q1 2023/24 had increased by 27% on Q1 of 2022/23 in Nuneaton town centre as shown in Appendix 1.

2.3 The footfall figures for Bedworth dropped by -1.7% for Q1 2023/24 when compared to Q1 figures for 202/23 as shown in Appendix 2.

2.4 Despite the encouraging increase in footfall for Nuneaton in Q1 2023/24, footfall remain significantly lower than pre- pandemic levels in line with the national statistics as shown in Appendix 3.

2.5 Footfall in Nuneaton increases by 37% in June 2023 compared to June 2022. this can be contributed to improvements in the weather and the increased visitor numbers driven by the 'Knife Angel' exhibit. This would support the post-pandemic importance of the social and recreational activities for town centres.

2.7 Dwell times in both town centres have increased significantly post-pandemic, this is likely a consequence of the revision of car parking charges (£1.50 for 3 hours) and a shift in visitor profile post pandemic towards a more recreational based visit away from work based visit.

Dwell times:

Nuneaton Q1 2019/20 135 minutes average dwell time
Q1 2023/24 197 minutes average dwell time

Bedworth Q1 2019/20 124 minutes average dwell time
Q1 2023/24 217 minutes average dwell time

2.8 Footfall captured at all Geo-sense points throughout Nuneaton town centre showed healthy increases against Q1 2022/23 with the exception of Abbey Street Car Park reporting a -18% decrease, which was to be expected given the closure of the surface car park at Abbey Street during Q1 of 2022/23.

Appendix 1. Footfall Nuneaton Q1 2022/23 v Q1 2023/24

Nuneaton	Q1	Q12	%+/-
	2022/23	2023/24	
Bridge St/Newdegate (10) (Pedestrianised high street)	246518	285909	15%
Harefield Rd/Bus Stn (9) (Pedestrianised high street)	206702	288516	39%
Queens Rd (4) (Pedestrianised high street)	193847	254023	31%
Coventry St (1)	178673	234809	31%
Church St/Bridge St (11) (Pedestrianised high street)	162452	230596	41%
Market Pl/Queens Rd (3) (Pedestrianised high street,Market)	141508	216708	53%
Abbey St - Car Park (7)	127582	104820	-18%
Stratford St/Abbey St (6) (High street)	93493	102735	10%
George Eliot Statue (8) (Pedestrianised high street)	63677	80170	26%
	1414452	1798286	27%

Appendix 2. Footfall Bedworth Q1 2022/23 v Q1 2023/24

Bedworth	Q1	Q12	%+/-
	2022/23	2023/24	
All Saints Square (Pedestrianised high street)	193492	187541	-3%
Bedworth Market (Indoor market)	29165	32015	9.70%
	222657	219556	-1.40%

Appendix 3. Nuneaton pre-pandemic v National pre-pandemic drop

Nuneaton v National Geo-sense	Nuneaton	National
Month	% Change (19-23)	% Change (19-23)
January	-51%	-38%
February	-42%	-31%
March	-34%	-32%
April	-31%	-34%
May	-24%	-34%
June	-25%	-34%
Total	-35%	-34%

2.9 Impacts on footfall numbers post-pandemic:

- Increase in hybrid working – 56% of workers now work some or all the week from home.
- 12% of visitors visiting the High Street less frequently when compared to 2019
- Consumer confidence down
- Loss of key attractors
- Online sales remain high following pandemic but are slowly falling back to pre-pandemic levels 2121 -36%, 2023 -25%

2.10 Importance of spend v footfall

Historically footfall figures have been used alongside with other key indicators as a measure of the health of town centres. However, visitor numbers in isolation do not provide the full picture, whilst numbers may increase it does not necessarily guarantee an increase in spend.

Reports nationally indicated that although footfall has increased in 2023 on the previous year, low consumer confidence is having a detrimental impact on local spend in town centres.

3. Car Parking Revenue

3.1 Car parking revenue in Q1 2023/24 was -1.7% down on Q1 2022/23. The figures reported are based on cash taking and pay by phone only. See Appendix 4. Car parking Revenue Q1 2022/23 v 2023/24

3.2 The figures for Q1 2022/23 include £41,000 of cash revenue from Abbey Street Surface car park which closed during this period in 2022 .

Taking Abbey Street car park income out of the equation would equate to 13% increase on Q1 2022/23 across the remaining car parks

3.3 Ringo pay by phone was introduced on the 4th April 2023. Since its introduction we have seen a significant uplift in the use of mobile card payments compared to 2022/23 when using the previous providers service.

This is likely a consequence of Ringo providing a better user interface and as the market leaders visitors having great confidence in using the Ringo service.

3.4 The following car parks showed the largest increase in revenue closure of Abbey Street surface car park are as follows:

1. Victoria 1 & 2
2. Harefield Road
3. Upper Abbey Street
4. Rope Walk
5 Justice Walk

3.5 The following car parks are returning the highest revenue per bay ratio:

1. Riverside
2. Town Hall
3. Victoria 1 & 2

Appendix 4. Car parking Revenue Q1 2022/23 v Q1 2023/24

Date	Cash Sheet Income	Phone & Pay	Monthly Total	% +/-
Apr-22	£99,512.30	£9,835.80	£109,348.10	
May-22	£94,079.75	£12,763.60	£106,843.35	
Jun-22	£83,026.75	£11,782.00	£94,808.75	
	£276,618.80	£34,381.40	£311,000.20	
Date	Cash Sheet Income	Phone & Pay (Ringo)	Monthly Total	
Apr-23	£76,600.10	£16,348.20	£92,948.30	-15.0%
May-23	£82,871.00	£20,638.50	£103,509.50	-3.1%
Jun-23	£88,002.60	£21,153.00	£109,155.60	15.0%
	£247,473.70	£58,139.70	£305,613.40	-1.7%

4. Market Stall Hire

4.1 The number of Market stalls rented for Q1 2023/24 was -5% down on Q1 2022/23. Appendix 5.

Appendix 5. Nuneaton Market Stall Numbers

Nuneaton	Q1	Q1	Q12
	2023/24	2022/23	2019/20
Wednesday	717	758	1125
Saturday	848	901	1154
Total	1565	1659	2279
% +/- v 2022/23	-5%		
% +/- v 2019/20	-31%	-27%	

4.2 Challenges to traditional markets

- traders number nationally have dropped by as much as 63% since 2009.
- rising costs reducing margins
- lack of new traders coming into the industry
- changes in consumer demands

5. Vacancy Rates

5.1 The current vacant unit rate are as follows:

Nuneaton 14.8%
Bedworth 9.7%

National Average 13.8%