
BRENT DAVIS
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Our Ref: MM

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Date 28th November 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

A meeting of the **BUSINESS, REGENERATION AND PLANNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
PANEL** will be held in the Committee Room A, Town Hall, Nuneaton on
Thursday, 7th December 2023 at 6.00 p.m.

Please note that meetings will be recorded for future publication on the Council's website.

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.

A G E N D A

PART 1 – PUBLIC BUSINESS

1. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVACUATION PROCEDURE

A fire drill is not expected, so if the alarm sounds please evacuate the building quickly and calmly. Please use the stairs and do not use the lifts. Once out of the building, please gather outside Lloyds Bank on the opposite side of the road.

Exit by the door by which you entered the room or by the fire exits which are clearly indicated by the standard green fire exit signs.

If you need any assistance in evacuating the building, please make yourself known to a member of staff.

Please also make sure all your mobile phones are turned off or set to silent.

The meeting will be live streamed to YouTube and will be available to view via the NBBC website.

2. APOLOGIES - To receive apologies for absence from the meeting.

3. MINUTES - To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Business, Regeneration and Planning Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 19th October 2023, attached **(Page 3)**.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/PARTY WHIP - To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary and Other interests in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct and of the Party Whip in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules 4E, Paragraph 16(b).

Declaring interests at meetings

If there is any item of business to be discussed at the meeting in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest or non-pecuniary interest (Other Interests), you must declare the interest appropriately at the start of the meeting or as soon as you become aware that you have an interest.

Arrangements have been made for interests that are declared regularly by members to be appended to the agenda **(Page 12)**. Any interest noted in the Schedule at the back of the agenda papers will be deemed to have been declared and will be minuted as such by the Committee Services Officer. As a general rule, there will, therefore, be no need for those Members to declare those interests as set out in the schedule.

There are, however, TWO EXCEPTIONS to the general rule:

1. When the interest amounts to a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest that is engaged in connection with any item on the agenda and the member feels that the interest is such that they must leave the room. Prior to leaving the room, the member must inform the meeting that they are doing so, to ensure that it is recorded in the minutes.
2. Where a dispensation has been granted to vote and/or speak on an item where there is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, but it is not referred to in the Schedule (where for example, the dispensation was granted by the Monitoring Officer immediately prior to the meeting). The existence and nature of the dispensation needs to be recorded in the minutes and will, therefore, have to be disclosed at an appropriate time to the meeting.

Note: Following the adoption of the new Code of Conduct, Members are reminded that they should declare the existence and nature of their personal interests at the commencement of the relevant item (or as soon as the interest becomes apparent). If that interest is a Disclosable Pecuniary or a Deemed Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, the Member must withdraw from the room.

Where a Member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest but has received a dispensation from Audit & Standards Committee, that Member may vote and/or speak on the matter (as the case may be) and must disclose the existence of the dispensation and any restrictions placed on it at the time the interest is declared.

Where a Member has a Deemed Disclosable Interest as defined in the Code of Conduct, the Member may address the meeting as a member of the public as set out in the Code.

Note: Council Procedure Rules require Members with Disclosable Pecuniary Interests to withdraw from the meeting unless a dispensation allows them to remain to vote and/or speak on the business giving rise to the interest.

Where a Member has a Deemed Disclosable Interest, the Council's Code of Council Conduct permits public speaking on the item, after which the Member is required by Procedure Rules to withdraw from the meeting.

5. PUBLIC CONSULTATION - Members of the Public will be given the opportunity to speak on specific agenda items, if notice has been received.

Members of the public will be given three minutes to speak on a particular item and this is strictly timed. The chair will inform all public speakers that: their comments must be limited to addressing issues raised in the agenda item under consideration: and that any departure from the item will not be tolerated.

The chair may interrupt the speaker if they start discussing other matters which are not related to the item, or the speaker uses threatening or inappropriate language towards Councillors or officers and if after a warning issued by the chair, the speaker persists, they will be asked to stop speaking by the chair. The chair will advise the speaker that, having ignored the warning, the speaker's opportunity to speak to the current or other items on the agenda may not be allowed. In this eventuality, the chair has discretion to exclude the speaker from speaking further on the item under consideration or other items of the agenda.

6. QUESTIONS TO CABINET – In accordance with Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rule 4.E.8 c) 20 minutes shall be set aside for questions to a member of the Cabinet from the Panel in relation to matters in respect of which the Panel has powers or duties.
7. COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION - THE KINGSHOLME SITE, NUNEATON – Update report of the Assistant Director - Planning, attached **(Page 14)**.
8. UPDATE ON DEVELOPMENT IN NUNEATON TOWN CENTRE – update report of the Head of Regeneration and Estates, attached **(Page 19)**.
9. TOWN CENTRE UPDATE– report of the Assistant Director – Economy **(Page 28)**.
10. FORWARD PLAN – attached for information **(Page 31)**.
11. WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24 – for noting, attached **(Page 41)**.

12. REVIEW OF PLANNING PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES – report of the Assistant Director – Planning, attached (**Page 43**).
13. ANY OTHER ITEMS which in the opinion of the Chair of the meeting should be considered as a matter of urgency because of special circumstances (which must be specified).

THIS PAGE IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council

Building A Better Borough

Nuneaton and Bedworth 2032: working in partnership, restoring pride in our borough

AIM 1: LIVE

We want to make our borough a place where our residents enjoy living and in which others choose to make their home.

Priority 1: Promote residents' health and wellbeing

Priority 2: Enable appropriate housing development

Priority 3: Sponsor a sustainable green approach

Priority 4: Prioritise community safety and empowerment

AIM 2: WORK

Using our prime location within the national road and rail networks and responding to the needs of private companies, we want to make our borough a place in which businesses choose to locate and where our residents enjoy a range of employment options.

Priority 1: Grow a strong and inclusive economy

Priority 2: Champion education and skills

Priority 3: Embrace new and emerging technology

Priority 4: Support local businesses

AIM 3: VISIT

Taking advantage of our open green spaces, our heritage, and our location within the West Midlands, we want our borough to be a vibrant destination for residents and visitors alike. A place where people and families want to spend time relaxing, socialising and taking part in leisure and cultural activities.

Priority 1: Create vibrant and diverse town centres

Priority 2: Stimulate regeneration

Priority 3: Celebrate and promote our heritage

Priority 4: Improve the physical environment

NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**BUSINESS, REGENERATION AND PLANNING
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL**

19th October 2023

A meeting of the Business, Regeneration and Planning Overview & Scrutiny Panel was held on Thursday, 19th October 2023 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall Nuneaton. This meeting was recorded for later publication on the Council's website.

Present

Councillors J. Clarke (Chair)

Councillors: J. Coventry-Moreton, M. Green, J. Hartshorn, G. Moreton, M. Walsh, M. Wright and J. Sheppard (substitute for Councillor N. Phillips).

Apologies: Councillors C. Cape and N. Phillips.

PART I – PUBLIC BUSINESS

BRP 9 **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Business, Regeneration and Planning Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 6th July 2023 be approved and duly signed by the Chairman.

BRP 10 **Declarations of Interest**

As Councillor J. Sheppard was a substitute Councillor for this meeting, their declarations were not detailed in the Schedule attached to the agenda. Councillor Clarke declared he is no longer a member of the Arts Council.

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 Councillor J. Sheppard and the update from Councillor Clarke.

BRP 11 **Questions to Cabinet**

The Portfolio Holder for Business and Regeneration (Councillor K. Wilson) and the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulation (Councillor R. Smith) were in attendance to answer the following questions put forward by the panel members.

Councillor M. Walsh asked the following question for the attention of the Portfolio Holder for Business and Regeneration:

This is a question for the Leader of the Council, Portfolio Holder for Business and Regeneration. With regards to the Changing Places toilets that are being provided for which we have a grant I believe, can you update us on the situation, particularly with regards to Bedworth Town Centre? Thank you.

The Portfolio Holder for Business and Regeneration replied:

Yes, Councillor Walsh is correct that we do have grant funding for the Changing Places toilets in both Nuneaton and in Bedworth. I have been in discussions with the Assistant Director for Economy over where we could place the Bedworth unit, because there are some challenges about where you site it – water, maintenance, all those sorts of things that go with it. Bearing in mind that the new Physical Activity Hub, or as I still call it Leisure Centre, itself will have its own Changing Places facility, the current thinking for where we are looking at placing the Changing Places facility with the unit

that we've secured through grant funding, is with the other toilet in Bedworth Town Centre by the market. The main thinking behind that, subject to everything else checking out I would emphasise Chair, it's still being checked out, is that it is with the existing toilets so that everyone knows where they are and also it will make it easier in terms of maintenance and monitoring and all the other utilities that will go with it. So that's the thinking at the present moment in time. I'm waiting for that work to be carried out and to confirm that it is suitable, but that's where myself and the AD are currently looking.

Councillor M. Wright asked the following question for the attention of the Portfolio Holder for Business and Regeneration:

I have a question for the Leader of the Council. Given the Council's disappointing performance on the Climate Action, the Council's Climate Action score card where we got just 15%. Now for comparison other District Councils scored between 8% and 61%, so this is based on a number of factors such as transport, planning and land use, governance and finance, biodiversity, collaboration and engagement and waste reduction. Nuneaton and Bedworth were underperforming, so could the Leader explain what plans he has to improve that performance.

The Portfolio Holder for Business and Regeneration replied:

As Councillor Wright will well know, I hope he would know, that transport itself is actually the responsibility of the County Council not the Borough Council so I can't speak for that. What our priorities are at this Borough Council is delivering what the residents actually want and need. So they actually want and need play in open spaces, they want a Planning Department that works, they want to see regeneration of our Town Centres, they want to see that those who are in need who are homeless or those who are on low incomes get access to the benefits and security of a new place to live, are their top priorities. Those are the areas that we'll be focusing on. If they happen to intersect with environmental, so-called green initiatives, then all to the good. But my focus is on keeping money in the hands of residents as far as we can and, for example, where we can retrofit properties or ensure properties are built to the latest standards we will do so. For example, I have been working with the Combined Authority in Warwickshire County Council on a new green energy initiative, which the Mayor of the West Midlands has secured funding for. I think it's in excess of £24 million of which 5 million is ear marked for non-constituent members and there is approximately a million pounds, from memory, ear marked for the Warwickshire County Council area. Now that will have the added benefit of helping with the green initiative, but my primary focus I must admit Chair, is that that will help them drive down their energy bills and that is a big bonus in these current difficult times that many businesses, and indeed individuals are facing. If it has an economic benefit I think that is a secondary target, because what we should be focusing on is keeping jobs in the local areas, supporting businesses and enabling people to keep paying their bills in this difficult cost of living era.

Councillor G. Moreton asked the following question for the attention of the Portfolio Holder for Business and Regeneration:

Is it true that the new taxi policy for the Borough is actually working that way to a greener, more clean environment, with the removal, just two nights ago, voted through to get rid of the most polluting taxi's off the roads.

The Portfolio Holder for Business and Regeneration replied:

I haven't read the individual policy on the Licensing Committee because obviously I'm not on that Committee. But I would say it doesn't surprise me Chair, because we need to get the older vehicles off the road that are used by our residents, and modern vehicles do have more, should we say, stringent requirements they have to adhere to, which does make them more environmentally friendly. So that would have an added benefit in that regard. I think the primary focus is ensuring that residents are protected and have decent safe cars that they can use as taxi licenses, but the added benefit will be, as part of that, the environmental initiative. But my primary focus as always will be the safety of the residents first.

BRP 12 Councillor Call for Action – The Kingsholme Site, Nuneaton

The Head of Regeneration and Estates submitted a briefing note to provide the Panel with background information in respect of the Kingsholme Public House, and an update on the situation in the light of the Councillor Call for Action that had been received. The completed Call for Action Request form was available to Panel members at the meeting, along with the previous Councillor Call for Action form that had been submitted in 2010.

The Panel discussed and asked questions on the following:

- The Council has been trying to work with the owners, but the owners have been unwilling to engage.
- To use Compulsory Purchase Order powers, the Council would need to demonstrate that it was in a position to deliver the redevelopment and a number of factors are involved with this that the Council would be unable to fulfil (for reasons including finance and resources).
- Planning and Building Control have assessed the building and the condition, and have confirmed they have no powers to take action.
- The Police and Fire Service are also involved due to incidents of arson. There is a multi-agency approach to speak with the owners and try and get the issue resolved.
- Councillors could see no benefit to the owner in allowing the site to deteriorate, apart from the investment required.
- It was acknowledged that the site has been empty since 2000, and concerns were raised that the owner was not carrying out due diligence.
- Planning permissions given relating to the site have not been followed through.
- The building is not a listed building.
- Section 79 (ruinous and dilapidated buildings and neglected sites) was discussed and it was agreed that more information was required in relation to this issue.
- Following discussions, members generally agreed that they could not progress with or support a CPO.
- It was recognised that the Council does not have the finances or resources (including capacity within the regeneration team).
- Members agreed that urgent talks with the owners alongside the Police and Fire Service are required, and if possible see if the emergency services can recover some costs from the owners.
- The Panel felt that the building did have a negative affect on the visual amenity of the area, but recognised their powers were limited.

- It was noted that Section 79 legislation mimics parts of a 215 notice, and Officers had indicated that the building does not meet the criteria for a 215 notice, and so it is unlikely that S. 79 will apply – however, it was agreed that more information was required in order for Members to make an informed decision. The Chair requested that information relating to S. 79 be forwarded to the Panel as soon as possible.

RESOLVED that

a) the contents of the report be noted; and

this item be deferred to the next Business, Regeneration and Planning Overview and Scrutiny Panel, to allow for a representative from Planning to attend alongside the Head of Regeneration and Estates.

BRP 13 Removal of Lily Pad Water Feature

A report of the Principal Building Surveyor (Corporate Assets) provided an opportunity for the Panel to review the process of the removal of the Lily Pad water feature and additional seating.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

BRP 14 Public Space Protection Order Updates

The Head of Economic Development and Communities provided a report which gave the Panel an opportunity to give their views on the effectiveness and monitoring arrangements of the orders.

The Panel discussed and asked questions on the following:

- Issues in Bedworth (and the whole Borough) with ‘no alcohol zone’ signage – and the need to make the signs meaningful and informative.
 - NBBC are working with the Police in relation to this.
- PSPO’s for alcohol initially related to the Town Centres, but are now Borough wide which allows agencies to use powers more effectively.
- PSPO updates will be provided to the OSP annually.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

BRP 15 Integrated Performance Report – First Quarter 2023-24

A report of the Risk Management and Performance Officer. The Panel were presented with a report which seeks to provide 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:

- The financial summary and figures relating to the car park were discussed, including comparisons to last year.
- Planning application time frames, and the impact long/difficult applications have on the figures.
- Figures relating to commercial properties owned by the Council and the possibility of having an indication showing which are retail and which are industrial.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

BRP 16 **Forward Plan**

The Forward Plan showing the key decisions that will be made in the four months commencing 1st November 2023, was provided to the Panel for information.

RESOLVED that the Forward Plan be noted.

BRP 17 **Work Programme 2023-2024**

The Panel were presented with the Work Programme for the municipal year 2023-2024. There is likely to be a joint Overview and Scrutiny Panel agenda item relating to S. 106 payments at the February Business, Regeneration and Planning OSP, where Members of the Housing, Environment and Health OSP will be invited to attend.

RESOLVED that the 2023-2024 work programme be noted.

Chair

Business, Regeneration and Planning Overview and Scrutiny Panel - Schedule of Declarations of Interests – 2023/2024

	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
	C. Cape	Director of Capability Coaching and Consultancy Ltd.	Member of the following Outside Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Armed Forces Covenant Meeting 	
	J. Clarke	Employed by Marcus Jones MP	County Councillor W.C.C. Nuneaton Conservative Association; Deputy Chairman Officer of the Abbey Preceptory No.541 - Nuneaton	
	J. Coventry-Moreton	School Receptionist – St Nicholas Chamberlain School, Bedworth	Share in rental dwelling at Sealand Drive, Bedworth and Tresilian Road, Bedworth.	
	M. Green	Employed by Horiba Mira – Engineering Technician	Chair of Education Standards Committee – St Thomas More School. School Appeals Panel Member Our Lady of the Angels Church. President – St Vincent De Paul Society Nuneaton. Director – Holy Spirit Catholic Multi Academy Company. Member of the George Eliot Fellowship Member of Other Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friendship Project for Children. • Nuneaton Education Strategy Group 	
	J. Hartshorn	Employed by Asda	Member of Nuneaton	

	Name of Councillor	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest	Other Personal Interest	Dispensation
		Nuneaton	Conservatives	
	G. Moreton	Member of School Appeals Panels at Warwickshire County Council	Share in rental dwellings at Sealand Drive, Bedworth and Tresillian Road, Exhall. Member on the following Outside Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bedworth Neighbourhood Watch Committee 	
	N. Phillips (Vice-Chair)	Employee of DWP	Member of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nuneaton Labour CLP • The Fabian Society • The George Eliot Society • The PCS Union • Central Credit Union • Stockingford Sports and Allotment Club • Haunchwood Sports and Social Club 	
	M. Walsh (Chair)	Employed by MacInnes Tooling Ltd. – UK Sales Manager		
	M. Wright			

**Business, Regeneration and Planning Overview and Scrutiny Panel -
Schedule of Declarations of Interests – 2023/2024**

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	M. Walsh (Chair)	Employed by MacInnes Tooling Ltd. – UK Sales Manager		
	M. Wright			

BRIEFING NOTE TO BUSINESS, REGENERATION & PLANNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

THE KINGSHOLME PUBLIC HOUSE, UPPER ABBEY STREET/JUBILEE WAY, NUNEATON

Background

Members will recall a report to the October meeting regarding powers to take action on the dilapidated Kingsholme Public House which is situated in a prominent location on the corner of Upper Abbey Street and Roanne Ringway, Nuneaton.

Since that meeting, alongside ongoing officer discussions, a demolition notice has been received by the site owner to the planning department.

Application to Demolish

Application received and validated on 13th October 2023. An 8-week expiry takes the application to 8th December 2023.

Consultation letters were sent to neighbours on 25th October 2023. Site notice was erected on 30 October 2023.

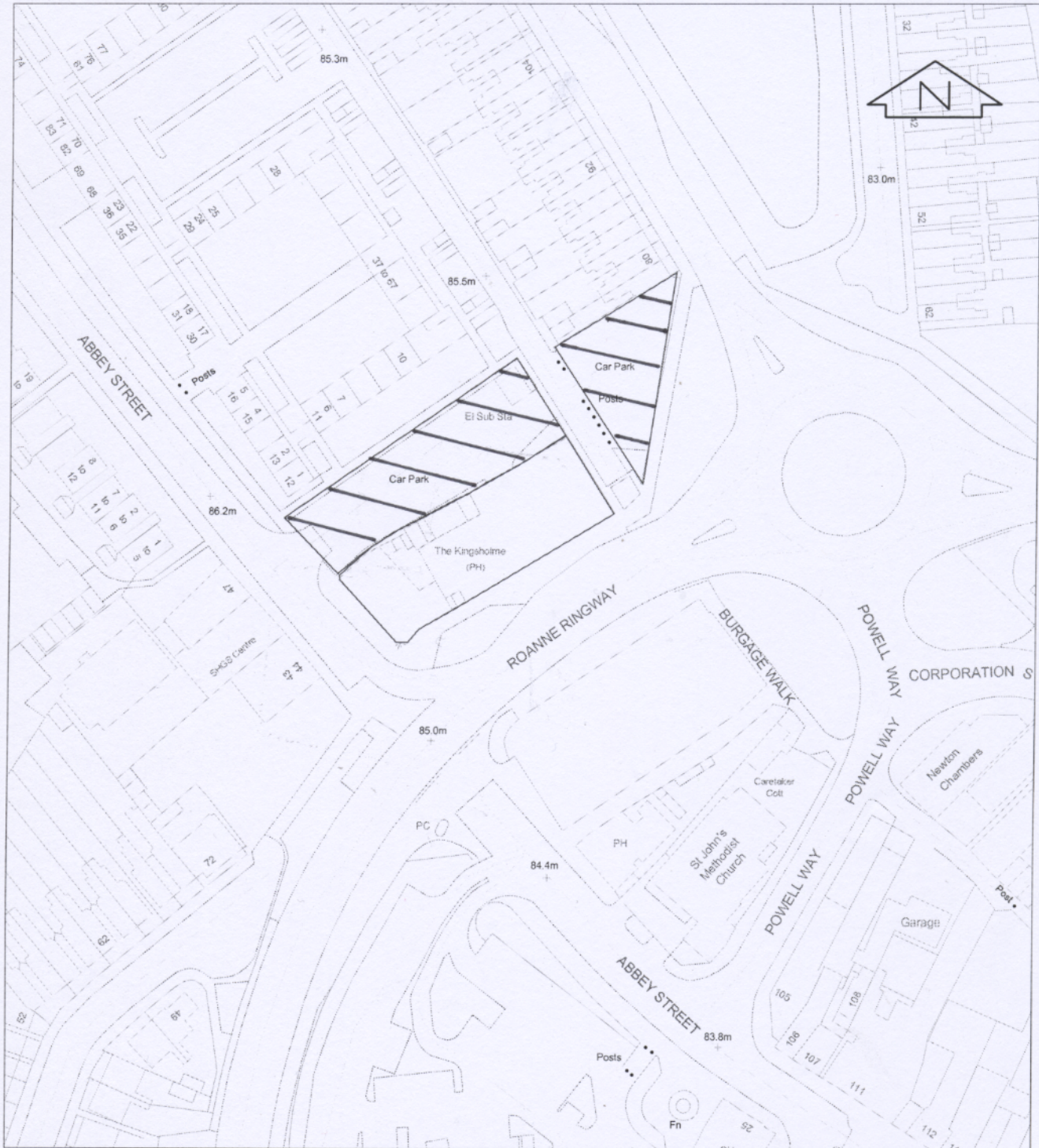
Application advertised on weekly list on 1st November 2023. Consultees emailed (Highways, Env Health, Police, Ecology, Fire, Town Centres, Water Officer, Central Building Control & Planning Policy) on 25th October 2023.

Earliest that the decision can be issued is from the 30th of November and an update to members will be provided at the meeting.

Appendix 1 : Site Plan

Appendix 2 – Request for Councillor Call for Action Form

Appendix 3 – Previous Call for Action Form (2010)



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NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Request for Councillor Call for Action

This form is to be used when a Ward Councillor requests a Councillor Call for Action on an issue in their Ward. The Councillor Call for Action procedure is attached.

WARD COUNCILLOR'S Cllr Neil Phillips, Cllr Jill Sheppard

RELATING TO WARD: ABBEY Kingsholm Public House (derelict building)

SUMMARY OF ISSUE RAISED AND WHY:

A councillor call for action was called by Cllr Phillips and Cllr Sheppard in 2010, 13 years ago. The building has continued to be a disgrace on the landscape as it is on a gateway into the town and will be opposite the new developments being created as part of transforming Nuneaton plans.

The building has become more derelict over the ensuing years become a target for vandalism and arson attacks (3 to date) over the last 12 months, putting residents and the fire service at risk of harm. It has recently been put on the derelict playgrounds list by the police and fire service.

The building has been used as a cannabis factory, attracts pigeons, vermin with overgrown vegetation. It has been totally neglected and environmental health have had to make numerous visits to the site over the years.

Several planning applications have been suggested but never enacted. The latest was 7 years ago in 2016 when planning permission was granted for a hot food takeaway and residential, but this never happened.

Residents are asking what is happening with this site. With all the other developments in the town this site needs developing, 13 years on since our last Councillor call for action and 7 years since the last planning application it is not acceptable for the situation to continue.

As councillors we have regularly spoken to officers to be told it is a watching brief, which is not acceptable anymore, action is now required.

COURSE OF ACTION TAKEN:

Council to seek urgent talks with the owner
Council to put CPO on the building

DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED FOR THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL:

Any documentation held by officers to assist the panel

Any incident documents from the police and fire and rescue service

Previous councillor call for action

SIGNED: Councillor: Cllr N Phillips Cllr Jj Sheppard

DATE 3/7/23

THIS REQUEST MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE PROPER OFFICER OR SCRUTINY OFFICER (BY POST, FAX OR EMAIL)

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council 2009

NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Request for Councillor Call for Action

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WARD COUNCILLOR'S NAME: Jill Sheppard and Neil Phillips

RELATING TO WARD: Abbey

SUMMARY OF ISSUE RAISED AND WHY: Kingsholme Public House

This has been empty for 10 years the condition of the building has deteriorated over time and has been the subject of vandalism, pigeon and rat infestations.

This building is on a main entrance road to the town and does not enhance the vicinity.

Over a period of time and currently, this building is being marketed but there is no interest

Residents are constantly approaching us to ask when the site will be redeveloped and why nothing has been done by this council

The People's Panel has raised this building as an issued and it has also been raised at the Abbey and Wembrook Community Forum.

There does not appear to be a will by this council to move this issue forward.

COURSE OF ACTION TAKEN:

Spoken to Les Snowden Regeneration Officer

Social OSP has raised concerns

Has been subject to discussing at committee 2003 to date

CPO was considered two years ago and no action has been taken

DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED FOR THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL:

Relevant committee and scrutiny papers

SIGNED: Councillor: J Sheppard
Neil Phillips

DATE: 23rd April 2010

THIS REQUEST MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE PROPER OFFICER OR SCRUTINY OFFICER (BY POST, FAX OR EMAIL)

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council 2009

Update on Development in Nuneaton Town Centre

Officers have continued to work to promote and bring forward development opportunities in Nuneaton Town Centre.

Development opportunities in Nuneaton Town Centre are underpinned by the ‘Transforming Nuneaton Programme’ (TNP) which is a package of projects that will make the town, and borough, much more competitive and help to address the north-south performance gap that exists as a result of lower economic growth and higher deprivation in the north of the County. The programme will support the town to reach its potential as a key urban hub lying on the A444 growth corridor.

Benefits of this programme of projects includes safeguarding and creating new jobs; a strong and attractive town; opportunities to raise aspirations, improve skills and the overall image of the town together with better connectivity within the borough, to Coventry, the wider sub-region and opportunities beyond.

Background to delivery

It is not unusual for development schemes to have very long lead-in and delivery times because of their scale and complexity, including:

- The scale of investment required to deliver such schemes.
- The need to secure private sector commitment.
- The need to secure future commitments from the right kind of occupiers, in sufficient numbers and over the necessary timescales
- Board commitment and Legal processes to be completed by stakeholders
- Grant application processes
- Changing market conditions locally and nationally
- Changing trends and fortunes of retail businesses within the time scale of development projects
- Very challenging market and financial conditions for Town Centre schemes
- Low land values in Nuneaton compared to other town centres with which we are in competition for private-sector investment
- The need to align all of the above at the same time
- Planning permissions
- Procurement lead in times
- Construction lead-in times

Much of the negotiation with commercial stakeholders falls within the category of commercial sensitivity and may even be governed by legally enforceable confidentiality agreements. This limits what information can be shared in the public domain, including at this Scrutiny Panel meeting.

Grayson Place

Grayson Place is a mixed use, leisure led development which links Queens Road to Abbey Street being delivered in 2 phases; images of the development are attached at Appendix 1A, B & C. Further information on the development is available on the development's dedicated website;

www.graysonplace.com

The development is being delivered by the Borough Council acting as both funder and developer.

The development benefits from financial support from the Future High Streets Fund, Towns Fund, West Midlands Combined Authority, the former Coventry & Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership and Warwickshire County Council totalling £17.25m.

Phase 1 of the development provides for the delivery of a 145 room hotel associated car parking including 7EV charging points and enabling works (i.e. demolition, remediation, etc.) to create development plateaus for Phase 2. Completion of construction of the hotel and enabling works are programmed for 31 May, 2024 with the hotel opening Summer 2024.

It is intended that Phase 2 of the development will deliver the following:

- Multi-screen Cinema
- Leisure unit
- Food Hall
- Food/restaurant/retail units.
- Office
- 30 residential unit comprising a mix of 1 and 2 bedroomed apartments.
- North Warwickshire & South Leicester College's Digital Skills & Innovation Centre.
- 303 space multi-storey car park
- 105 surface level car parking spaces
- e-Mobility hub providing 33EV charging points
- Storage for 36 cycles within the multi-storey car park, together with cycle hoops across the development.

Planning permission has now been secured for all elements of the development enabling negotiations to be finalised with the Council's construction partner, BAM Construction.

Phase 2 is provisionally programmed to be completed by Summer 2025.

The Council has secured "Hampton By Hilton" to run the hotel and the "Really Local Group" to operate the cinema.

There is strong interest from operators in the food hall and retail units

The residential units will be managed by NABCEL on behalf of the Council and the car parking will be retained and operated by the Council.

Vicarage Street

This is a mixed use scheme being led and delivered by Warwickshire County Council supported by the Borough Council. The proposed development provides for a new “Library & Business Centre” together with up to 64 town houses; an indicative image of the development is attached at Appendix 2.

A Planning Application has been submitted in respect of the proposed scheme and this is currently being progressed.

The site for the development has been assembled, with only the relocation of the Post office Sorting Office to new premises being built at Bermuda outstanding.

The Borough Council has recently agreed to a conditional sale of its land at Vicarage Street, comprising the Justice Walk car park and the vacant site on the corner of Wheat Street and Vicarage Street to facilitate delivery of the development.

The method and programme for the delivery of the development is being developed, however, until such time as Planning Permission is secured progress will be limited.

Bridge to Living - Bridge Street/Church Street

A mixed use scheme delivering modern ground floor retail/office units fronting Church Street and Bridge Street together with and 17 residential units comprising a mix of apartments and town houses. In addition, the river in this location will be opened up and a new walkway created linking Bridge Street to the George Elliott Memorial Gardens; images of the development are attached at Appendix 3 A & B.

Planning Permission has been secured for the development and site assembly works are almost completed with 3 remaining occupiers to vacate.

Further consideration is currently being given to how the development can be brought forward and this will inform the programme for delivery.

Former Debenhams store

A Planning Application has been submitted by the owners in respect of the conversion of the former department store to residential use, however, this has not, as yet, been determined.

There is no further update on this.

LWS/23.111.2023

- ① Hotel
- ② Family entertainment
- ③ Cinema
- ④ Multi-storey car park
- ⑤ Food Hall
- ⑥ Public Square
- ⑦ Bar / Restaurant / Shopping
- ⑧ College
- ⑨ Bar / Restaurant / Shopping / Living

Masterplan

Transformation starts here

This exciting new meeting, eating, drinking and entertainment destination is the first landmark development in the wider Transforming Nuneaton programme that will completely reinvent and reinvigorate our town centre.





02 | Grayson Place

Public space looking towards the Food hall, Digital Skills and Innovation Centre and town centre apartments.



06 | Eat, drink & shop

Food hall in the foreground, with cinema and entertainment centre in the background.



1.2 PARKS GATEWAY VISUAL



1.4 VIEW TO MEMORIAL GARDENS VISUAL



NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to: OSP BRP -

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

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 Report on Q2 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 Q2 2023/24 had increased by 22% on Q2 of 2022/23 in Nuneaton town centre

2.3 The footfall figures for Bedworth dropped by -4% for Q2 2023/24 when compared to Q2 figures for 2022/23

2.4 Despite the encouraging increase in footfall for Nuneaton in Q2 2023/24, footfall remain significantly lower than pre- pandemic levels in line with the national statistics.

Nuneaton 2019 v 2023 -36%

Bedworth 2019 v 2023 -49%

2.5 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 Q2 2019/20 - 135 minutes average dwell time
 Q2 2023/24 - 204 minutes average dwell time

Bedworth Q2 2019/20 - 124 minutes average dwell time
 Q2 2023/24 - 211 minutes average dwell time

3. Car Parking Revenue

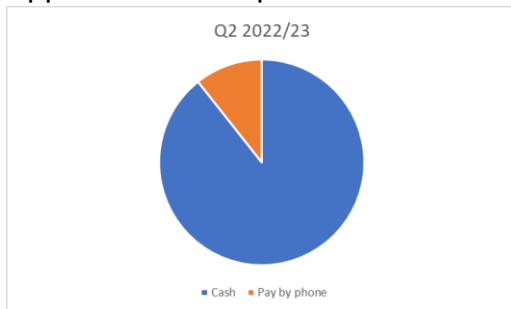
3.1 Car parking revenue in Q2 2023/24 was -3% down on Q1 2022/23. The figures reported are based on cash taking and pay by phone (now Ringo) only. See Appendix 3. Car parking Revenue Q2 2022/23 v 2023/24

3.2 The figures for Q1 2022/23 include £86,108 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 Q2 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. See Appendix 1 and 2 below

Appendix 1. Q2 Split 2022/23



Appendix 2. Split 2023/24



Appendix 3. Car parking Revenue Q2 2022/23 v Q2 2023/24

Income	April	May	June	July	August	September	Total	% +/-
Cash 2022	£82,457	£78,400	£69,189	£82,961	£72,158	£85,428	£470,594	
Pay by Phone 2022	£8,197	£10,636	£9,818	£9,601	£8,629	£9,312	£56,194	
	£90,654	£89,036	£79,007	£92,562	£80,787	£94,741	£526,787	
Cash 2023	£63,833	£69,394	£73,685	£63,361	£65,821	£52,192	£388,287	-19%
Ringo 2023	£13,676	£19,685	£20,418	£20,464	£20,532	£26,020	£120,794	115%
	£77,509	£89,079	£94,102	£83,825	£86,353	£78,212	£509,080	-3%

4. Market Stall Hire

4.1 The number of Market stalls hired for Q2 2023/24 in Nuneaton was -2% down on Q2 2022/23. Appendix 4.

The number of Market stalls hired for Q2 2023/24 in Bedworth was -5% down on Q2 2022/23. Appendix 5.

Appendix 4. Nuneaton Market Stall Numbers

Nuneaton	Stall Hired	Stall Hired	
	Q2 2022/23	Q2 2023/24	% +/-
Wednesday	1521	1587	4%
Saturday	1809	1685	-7%
Total	3330	3272	-2%

Appendix 5. Bedworth Market Stall Numbers

Bedworth	Stall Hired	Stall Hired	
	Q2 2022/23	Q2 2023/24	% +/-
Lock up-units	1102	1053	-4%
Casual Traders	1253	1187	-5%
	2355	2240	-5%

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

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council

FORWARD PLAN SHOWING THE KEY DECISIONS THAT WILL BE MADE IN THE 4 MONTHS BEGINNING 1ST DECEMBER 2023 AND EXEMPT INFORMATION DECISIONS THAT ARE TO BE MADE DURING DECEMBER, 2023.

The table below shows the likely date the listed key decisions will be made and by whom and also lists the subject of decisions to be made under Exempt Information rules. Please contact the officer mentioned in the seventh column if you wish to know:-

- ◆ the groups or organisations whom the decision maker will consult before making the decision;
- ◆ how such consultation will be undertaken;
- ◆ what documents the decision maker will consider in making that decision; or
- ◆ how, and by when, you can make any representations about the proposed decision.

Items highlighted in **yellow** are new or amended items for this publication.

Date entered:	Item - Description	Committee	In Private Session	Reason for Item being Considered in Private Session	Date	Report Author	Person Responsible	Cabinet Portfolio	OSP
30/09/20	Local Government Devolution	Cabinet	No		December 2023	Brent Davis ☎02476 376347	Brent Davis ☎02476376347	Business & Regeneration	Business, Regen & Planning
22/08/22	Johnson Road, Bedworth – Housing Development / Community Use proposal	Cabinet	No		February 2024	Katie Memetovi c-Bye ☎02476 376147	Kevin Hollis ☎02476376143	Public Services	Finance and Public Service

21/02/23	General Fund Budget Monitoring Q2	Cabinet	No		November 2023	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476 376002	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476376002	Finance and Corporate	Finance and Public Services
21/02/23	HRA Budget Monitoring Q2	Cabinet	No		November 2023	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476 376002	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476376002	Finance and Corporate	Finance and Public Services
21/02/23	Capital Monitoring Q2	Cabinet	No		November 2023	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476 376002	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476376002	Finance and Corporate	Finance and Public Services
21/02/23	General Fund Budget 2024/25	Cabinet	No		February 2024	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476 376002	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476376002	Finance and Corporate	Finance and Public Services
21/02/23	HRA Budget 2024/25	Cabinet	No		February 2024	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476 376002	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476376002	Finance and Corporate	Finance and Public Services
21/02/23	Treasury Strategy 2024/25	Cabinet	No		February 2024	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476 376002	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476376002	Finance and Corporate	Finance and Public Services

21/02/23	General Fund Budget Monitoring Q3	Cabinet	No		March 2024	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476 376002	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476376002	Finance and Corporate	Finance and Public Services
21/02/23	HRA Budget Monitoring Q3	Cabinet	No		March 2024	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476 376002	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476376002	Finance and Corporate	Finance and Public Services
21/02/23	Capital Monitoring Q3	Cabinet	No		March 2024	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476 376002	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476376002	Finance and Corporate	Finance and Public Services
31/03/23	Parks & Green Spaces Strategy	Cabinet	No		January 2024	David Truslove ☎02476 376569	Kevin Hollis ☎02476 376143	Public Services	Finance and Public Services
31/07/23	Local Levelling Up Plan	Cabinet	No		December 2023	Tom Shardlow ☎02476 376004	Tom Shardlow ☎02476 376004	Business & Regeneration	Business, Regen & Planning
31/05/23	Share Enforcement Agency Contract	Cabinet	No		December 2023	Jade Fuller ☎0247637 6165	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476376002	Finance and Corporate	Finance & Public Service

31/05/23	Markets Review	Cabinet	No		December 2023	Jonathan White ☎02476 376549	Tom Shardlow ☎02476 376004	Business & Regeneration	Business, Regen & Planning
31/05/23	Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan	Cabinet	No		January 2024	Jonathan White ☎02476 376549	Tom Shardlow ☎02476 376004	Business & Regeneration	Business, Regen & Planning
31/05/23	Polling District and Polling Place Review	Cabinet/Council	No		November 2023	Martyn Harris ☎02476 376218	Brent Davis ☎02476376347	Finance and Corporate	Finance & Public Service
30/06/23	Bedworth Civic Hall - Update	Cabinet	No		February 2024	Katie Memetovic-Bye ☎02476 376147	Kevin Hollis ☎02476376143	Public Services	Finance and Public Services
30/06/23	Borough Plan Approval for Submission of Examination (Reg 20 stage)	Cabinet/Council	No		December 2023	Maria Bailey ☎02476 376144	Kevin Hollis ☎02476376143	Planning and Regulation	Business, Regen & Planning
31/07/23	General Fund Revenue Outturn 2023/24	Cabinet	No		July 2024	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476 376002	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476376002	Finance and Corporate	Finance and Public Services

31/07/23	HRA Revenue Outturn 2023/24	Cabinet	No		July 2024	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476 376002	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476376002	Finance and Corporate	Finance and Public Services
31/07/23	Capital Outturn 2023/24	Cabinet	No		July 2024	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476 376002	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476376002	Finance and Corporate	Finance and Public Services
31/07/23	Collection Fund 2023/24	Cabinet	No		July 2024	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476 376002	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476376002	Finance and Corporate	Finance and Public Services
31/07/23	Treasury Annual Report 2023/24	Cabinet	No		July 2024	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476 376002	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476376002	Finance and Corporate	Finance and Public Services
07/08/23	Co-Mingled, New refuse collection Routes and New MRF (recycling)	Cabinet	No		February 2024	Glen McGrandie ☎02476 376049	Kevin Hollis ☎02476376143	Public Services	Finance and Public Services
25/09/23	General Fund Budget Monitoring Q1	Cabinet	No		September 2024	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476 376002	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476376002	Finance and Corporate	Finance and Public Services

25/09/23	HRA Budget Monitoring Q1	Cabinet	No		September 2024	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476 376002	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476376002	Finance and Corporate	Finance and Public Services
25/09/23	Capital Monitoring Q1	Cabinet	No		September 2024	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476 376002	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476376002	Finance and Corporate	Finance and Public Services
25/09/23	Bedworth Physical Activity Hub Update	Cabinet	No		January/February 2024	Katie Memetovic-Bye ☎02476 376147	Kevin Hollis ☎02476376143	Public Services	Finance and Public Services
30/09/23	Infrastructure Funding Statement	Cabinet	No		December 2023	Maria Bailey ☎02476 376144	Kevin Hollis ☎02476376143	Planning & Regulation	Business, Regen & Planning
30/09/23	Article 4 Directions	Cabinet & Council	No		December 2023	Maria Bailey ☎02476 376144	Kevin Hollis ☎02476376143	Planning & Regulation	Business, Regen & Planning
30/09/23	Leisure Decarbonisation Submission	Cabinet	No		November 2023	Katie Memetovic-Bye ☎02476 376147	Kevin Hollis ☎02476376143	Public Services	Finance and Public Services

30/09/23	Draft General Fund Budget	Cabinet	No		December 2023	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476 376002	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476376002	Finance and Corporate	Finance and Public Services
11/10/23	Treasury – Half Yearly report	Cabinet	No		December 2023	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476 376002	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476376002	Finance and Corporate	Finance and Public Services
11/10/23	Supported Housing (Regulatory) Act 2023- NBBC Strategy	Cabinet	No		January 2024	Jane Grant ☎02476 376483	Dawn Dawson ☎02476376408	Housing and Communities	Housing, Env and Health
11/10/23	Delivery of Phase 2 Reimagining Nuneaton Museum & Art Gallery	Cabinet	No		December 2023	Catherine Nisbet ☎02476 376483	Kevin Hollis ☎02476376143	Public Services	Finance and Public Services
31/10/23	Housing Strategy 2024-29	Cabinet	No		March 2024	Jane Grant ☎02476 376483	Dawn Dawson ☎02476376408	Housing and Communities	Housing, Env & Health
31/10/23	Homelessness and Rough sleeping Strategy 2024-29	Cabinet	No		March 2024	Jane Grant ☎02476 376483	Dawn Dawson ☎02476376408	Housing and Communities	Housing, Env & Health

Cabinet – Exempt Items									
Date entered:	Item - Description	Committee	In Private Session	Reason for Item being Considered in Private Session	Date	Report Author	Person Responsible	Cabinet Portfolio	OSP
06/05/22	Regeneration Projects Update	Cabinet	Yes	The report will contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding the information)	November 2023	Les Snowden ☎02476 376249	Tom Shardlow ☎02476 376004	Business & Regeneration	Business, Regen & Planning
12/10/23	Revised Governance Arrangements	Cabinet	Yes	The report will contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding the information)	November 2023	Victoria Summerfield ☎0247637 6002	Victoria Summerfield ☎02476376002	Finance & Corporate	Finance and Public Services

Individual Cabinet Member Decisions
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Date entered:	Item - Description	Portfolio Holder	In Private Session	Reason for Item being Considered in Private Session	Date	Report Author	Person Responsible	OSP
02/05/23	Housing Financial Assistance Policy	Housing and Communities	No		November 2023	Paul Coopey ☎0247637 6400	Dawn Dawson ☎02476376408	Housing, Env and Health
Individual Cabinet Member Decisions – Exempt Items								
	None							

Officer Decisions									
Date entered:	Item - Description	Directorate	In Private Session	Reason for Item being Considered in Private Session	Date	Report Author	Person Responsible	Cabinet Portfolio	OSP
	None								
Officer Decisions – Exempt Items									

The Cabinet Members are:

Business and Regeneration (Leader) - Councillor K. Wilson
Housing and Communities (Deputy Leader) - Councillor C. Golby
Finance and Corporate - Councillor S. Croft
Public Services - Councillor S. Markham
Planning and Regulation - Councillor R. Smith
Health and Environment - Councillor J. Gutteridge

Observer:
Leader of the Main Opposition Group - Councillor C. Watkins

Dated: 31st October 2023

Signed: K. Wilson (Leader of the Council)

Business, Regeneration and Planning Overview and Scrutiny Panel – Work Programme 2023/24

Meeting dates: 6th July 2023, 19th October 2023, 7th December 2023, 8th February 2024, 25th April 2024

Date Added	Lead Officer	Title	Description	Scrutiny/ Overview	Proposed Committee Date	Include in 2024/25 Work Programme	On Agenda 2023/2024
	Steve Gore	Integrated Performance Report	Quarterly Benchmarking Report		6 th July 2023 19 th Oct 2023 8 th February '24 25 th April 2024	Yes	Yes
April 2017		Local Enterprise Partnership	Annual report of activities in NBBC of the CWLEP		July 2023	No	Yes
	Jonathan White	Town Centres Update	Update on footfall, events and parking		July 2023	Yes	Yes
June 2022	Abu Malek/ Andrew Snowden	PSPO review	Update on the effectiveness of the current PSPOs	Overview	October 2023	Yes	Yes
	Glenn Hooper	Lilypad Fountain	Update on the lilypad Fountain, including costs and replacement seating		October 2023	No	Yes
April 2016 Ongoing	Les Snowden/ Jonathan White	Town Centre Development and Project Update	To provide an update for Members on the current progress being made with the Town Centre Development and the progress on Abbey Street and Vicarage Street projects. Also, any other future proposed redevelopment in the Town Centres	Performance Monitoring	December 2023		Yes
June 2022	Tom Shardlow/ Les Snowden	Regeneration in Bedworth Town Centre	To provide members with an update on the regeneration efforts in Bedworth	Performance Monitoring	December 2023 Verbal Update		Verbal update
October 2022	Jonathan White	Town Centres Update (inc Christmas and Markets)	To provide members with an update on the markets, footfall and Christmas	Update	December 2023		Yes
June 2022	Maria Bailey/ Jacqui Padbury	Monitoring delivery of the Borough	*A yearly monitoring report including details of spend of Section 106 monies and biodiversity net gain within and external to the sites.	Overview	February 2024		

		Plan and consideration of the data around the land supply targets.					
2015/16	Les Snowden	Council Owned Land and Leases	Select Committees request for further work to be undertaken regarding the land that the Council holds and the Leases in place with a view to increasing income through sales/lettings.	Scrutiny	February 2024		
	Jonanathan White	Nuneaton BID (Business Improvement District)	Update for the Panel		February 2024		

*The Housing, Environment and Health OSP Members will be invited to the February meeting to have a joint item relating to S.106 monies.

NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to: Business, Regeneration and Planning Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Date: 7th December 2023

From: Maria Bailey Assistant Director of Planning

Subject: Review of planning practices and procedures

Portfolio: Planning and Regulation – Cllr Richard Smith

Corporate Aim: Building a Better Borough Aim: 2
Building a Better Borough Priority: 2

1.0 OBJECTIVES OF SCRUTINY

To scrutinise the effectiveness of the:

1. Measures being put in place in the planning service in relation to the approval of extensions to properties to ensure they meet legislative and Policy requirements.

2.0 WHAT IS THE PANEL BEING ASKED TO CONSIDER?

The Members of the Panel will bear in mind the context of the corporate priorities and the financial constraints and come to a view on the following: -

1. Note the contents of the report.
2. Note that the Council is committed to improving the planning service through an ongoing restructure and investment in the planning service.
3. Note the specific measures being put in place to avoid similar costs against the Council in the future.

3.0 WHO CAN THE PANEL INFLUENCE?

The Panel can express its view on the measures being put in place to avoid the reoccurrence of fault being found by the Ombudsman. The outcome of the Panels debate will be provided to the Assistant Director of Planning via the Portfolio Holder.

A copy of this report and outcome of the Panels debate will be sent to the Ombudsman as requested.

4.0 WHAT INFORMATION WILL BE PRESENTED?

The Panel is asked to consider the background information in the report and appendices.

The item relates specifically to the work of the Business, Regeneration and Planning Overview & Scrutiny Panel and includes details of the measures being put in place in the Planning Service.

The Panel will have an opportunity to question the Portfolio Holder Councillor Richard Smith if required.

The Overview & Scrutiny Support Officer will provide any additional information as appropriate, or as requested by the Panel Members.

5.0 Appendices

The following evidence has been submitted and is appended to this paper: -

Appendix A - Covering Report.

Business, Regeneration and Planning Overview & Scrutiny Panel

2023

Review of planning practices and procedures to avoid reoccurrence of similar issues

1.0. Background

1.1. During Summer 2023 the Ombudsman dealt with three complaints that related to NBBC giving permission to a neighbour to add a large roof extension to a property in breach of planning policy. No fault was found in terms of one complaint but Appendix 2, which must remain confidential includes the decision on the two other complaints where the Ombudsman found the Council was at fault in that we failed to properly consider Planning law and our own policy. But for this fault, the ombudsman found that the Council would not have approved the application.

1.2. In recognition of the injustice caused the Council agreed to costs being paid to the two complainants based on the loss of value for the complaint's properties. As part of the ombudsman decision made in August 2023 we also agreed to carry out a review of what happened and decide whether change to practice and procedures or further officer training were necessary to avoid reoccurrence of the fault that was found. The Council also committed to report the outcome of the review to the Ombudsman, which has been done, and also report the outcome of the review to the relevant Council Scrutiny Committee.

2.0. Outcome of Review and Measures put in place.

2.1 An investigation into failure to consult the neighbours has resulted in additional officer training taking place and amendments to the current planning software set up. It is recognised that the existing software is outdated with too much room for manual error on this and the procurement of a more up to date software package is going through due process. It is anticipated that new software will be in place during 2024/25 financial year.

2.2 A further investigation into the fault in failing to apply Planning law and NBBC's own policies correctly has resulted in additional staff training being undertaken during October 2023. Additional checking mechanisms are being putting place by senior planning officers so that all reports drafted by more junior officers are checked before being published and decisions issued.

2.3 In terms of the training budget this has been increased recognising that NBBC has a young but enthusiastic team that need investment in with the right skills development. A restructure in the team has also added to the compliment of staff to try to ensure that officers have manageable workloads to again avoid pressurised mistakes being made.

3.0 Recommendations

3.1 Scrutiny panel members recognise the processes now put in place to support practices and also the review of the current software to support preventing these issues again.

ENDS