

NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

NUNEATON TOWN DEAL BOARD

17th February 2023

A meeting of the Town Deal Board was held on Friday, 17th February, 2023. The meeting was held at Saints, in Nuneaton town centre.

Present

Sean Farnell (CWLEP) – Chair

Present: Amanda Bourne, Councillor Jeff Clarke (WCC), Jet Jones, Tony O’Callaghan (WMCA, substitute for Dr. Julie Nugent), Marcus Jones MP, Stuart Noss, Marion Plant, Lindsey Randle, Les Ratcliffe (CWLEP) and Alison Thompson.

Officers in attendance: Ian Andrew (NBBC), Wendy Bolton (NBBC), Dawn Dawson (NBBC), Tom Hobbs (NBBC), Catherine Marks (WCC) and Sandy Johal.

Apologies: Councillor Peter Butlin (WCC), Councillor Clare Golby (NBBC), Uly Lyons, Dr Julie Nugent (WMCA), Patricia Willoughby and Councillor Kris Wilson (NBBC).

TDB165 Chair’s welcome and announcements

The Chair welcomed Board members to the meeting and thanked Saints for hosting the Board meeting.

TDB166 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 18th November, 2022, were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

TDB167 Declarations of Interests

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

TDB168 Saints

A tour of the Saints building took place, with particular interest in the proposed renovation and refurbishment of the first floor ballroom, restrooms and kitchen, which was to be funded by £600k of Towns Fund monies.

A Saints Progress Report for 2021/22 was attached to the agenda. A verbal update was provided by Jet Jones, Director of Regeneration and

Community Transformation and CEO of 'Together For Change' for the Diocese of Coventry.

Consideration was given to the project's synergy with other Towns Fund and Transforming Nuneaton projects.

It was agreed that once the building purchase was completed a more overt communication piece be released detailing the Saints story and integration with other Transforming Nuneaton projects.

TDB169 Museum & Parks Project Update

The Programme Manager provided a verbal update on the status of the project. It was recognised that this was the flag ship project of the programme with it being a key cultural asset and its links to the wider visitor economy, but because of a funding gap there was a risk of the project not being delivered.

The Programme Manager reported that consideration had been given to reallocating some of the available funding from other projects to meet the shortfall for this key project:

- Digital Evolution - works now to be delivered by the private sector.
- Weddington Road Cycling Link - further design work had found that the project could be delivered for £500k less without any impact on outputs.
- Visiting Nuneaton: Changing Perspectives – it had been agreed that it would be challenging to deliver this public realm project alongside all the other project construction works happening at the same time in the same area. NBBC/WCC therefore had agreed to pause the project with a view to it being delivered at some point in the future when additional funding had been found.

It was noted that the Town Deal Board Chair had been consulted and given written approval to these changes. A Business Case had been submitted and approved by DLUCH in January 2023. Formal approval of the reallocation of funding was still awaited from government.

The Programme Manager reported that projects were still on track for completion by the fund deadline of March 2026.

TDB170 Digital Skills & Innovation Centre

The Programme Manager updated the Board on project developments since the last meeting. Planning permission had been received in January 2023 and BAM, the contractors, were moving forward with delivering the first stage of the Abbey Street project, now named 'Grayson Place' (a

brochure was available on request). It was anticipated that the contract for final works would be signed later in the year.

It was noted that there would be an opportunity for the Town Deal Board to have a site visit at an appropriate time.

It was reported that the contract with the college had been signed off and that there was a sense of excitement and optimism from college students, specialist restaurant staff and entrepreneurs.

TDB171 Towns Fund Communications

Consideration was given to the wider coordination opportunity for Transforming Nuneaton and Towns Fund projects communications. The Transforming Nuneaton Project Officer attended the meeting and informed the Board of the current media channels available. She expressed a desire to release joint communication messages.

It was agreed that the best approach was to share people's stories and perspectives, eg students, saints activity users, talking about the impact and difference the project is making to residents and their families. Consideration was also given to the need for a wider marketing strategy, eg the private sector market; the quality and benefit of producing professional brochures was discussed.

Consideration was given to the possibility of providing tours of the Abbey Street site to business and organisational groups, for example repeating the Town Centre Partnership site visit.

Consideration was also given to communicating how the programme could support residents during the cost of living crisis and the longer term plan to help solve some of those issues, eg potential recruitment and apprenticeship opportunities at the hotel. It was felt important to capture the message that the Hilton Hotel chain was enthusiastic about Nuneaton and who would use the hotel; and that more regional promotion work could be done recognising that the new King Edward College town centre campus was attracting students from around the region.

The Director for Regeneration & Housing recommended that a review of the content of Town Investment Plan would be helpful and consideration be given to how that content could be presented in a professional brochure. Whilst the Town Investment Plan vision supported Transforming Nuneaton they were currently not being linked together.

It was agreed that the personal message had up to now been missed for valid reasons but that it was now time to change gear with programme communications with an emphasis on marketing.

TDB172 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 as at February 2023, the key risks and upcoming activities.

It was reported that projects were on track to deliver by the deadline, however there had been a change to delivery dates for the transport project due to timing on the network.

The content of the Highlight Report was noted.

TDB173 Communications and Engagement Plan

An updated rolling masterplan of Towns Fund communications and engagement was to be circulated following the meeting for information.

The NBBC Corporate Communications and Marketing Manager highlighted the following:

- Abbey Street Development - Grayson Place launch.
- Saints – pieces of work were imminent.
- Bridge to Living – pieces of work were imminent.

TDB174 Any Other Business

- a) Nuneaton Train Station - consultation had been commissioned on the strategic master plan for the area around the train station. Interest in workshops to be expressed to the Transforming Nuneaton Project Officer.
- b) The Programme Manager notified the Board that this was his last Board meeting before he took up a new position with Tamworth Borough Council. The Chair thanked Tom Hobbs for his work on the programme and expressed the Board's best wishes for the future.

TDB175 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 of the description specified in paragraph (iii) of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act.

CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

TDB176 Risk Register

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

Consideration was given to contractor availability, however the Programme Manager reported that no issues had been identified at present.

The content of the current Risk Register was noted.

Chair of the Board