

NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

SIMPLIFICATION PATHFINDER BOARD

4 April 2025

A meeting of the Simplification Pathfinder Board was held on Friday 4 April 2025. The meeting was held at The Saints, Newdegate Street, Nuneaton, CV11 4ED.

Present: Sean Farnell (CWLEP) - Chair, Alison Thompson (WCAVA), Marion Plant (NWSLC), Lindsey Randle (Horiba-Mira), Nicky King (Councillor), Steve Hey (Councillor), Jet Jones (Saints), Jodie Gosling (MP), Les Ratcliffe (CWC), Chris Egan (WCC), Dr Elinor Parsons

Officers in attendance: Sandy Johal (NBBC), Salewa A-Ogunleye (NBBC) - Mins

Apologies: Jenni Northcote (NHS), Stuart Noss (KEGS), Garry Palmer (WCC), Maria Bailey (NBBC)

SPB21 Chair's welcome and announcements

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

SPB22 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2025, were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

SPB23 Declarations of Interests

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

SPB24 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.

- Grayson Place – Phase 1 – hotel is operational. Phase 2 – formal signing of contract took place on 20 December 2024, S73 approved at committee on 11 March 2025. Leisure box (formerly cinema box) still on track to be completed by May 2025. Food Hall wall cladding and upper floor slab are progressing, with completion expected in October 2025.
- George Eliot Visitors Centre - The Planning application went to planning Committee on 11 February 2025 and was granted approval. Awaiting confirmation for no call from the Secretary of State.

- Saints – JJ informed the project completion day was on Friday 4 April, The Project was completed on budget and on time. The opening event is planned for Monday 7 April 2025. Completed works includes -Kitchen renovation, Roof repairs. The plans include – Installing a new computer system, implementing safeguarding and Hiring a bookings coordinator.
- Parks Revival – Currently at RIBA stage 3, Focussing on design development. Project manager consulting with the Environmental Agency and arranging a site visit.
- E-mobility – Exploring the option of EV charging points within Grayson place development. Currently discussing the potential to extend an existing contract with BAM.
- Bedworth Physical Activity Hub – Main ground works have been completed, steel works are in progress. Operational completion is planned for March 2026 (Stage One), External area completion is expected October 2026 (Stage Two).
- Bridge to Living – Unit 20 was previously occupied, since progressed as surrender sign has been secured, the occupant is expected to move out by end of the month. Pushing ahead under the PAGABO framework to demolish the site and option analysis will be carried out.

SPB25

Communication Updates

- a) Website Refresh: SJ announce refreshing the Grayson Place website and bringing it in-house, Internal communications teams will manage the website.
- b) Communication Strategy – The board discussed the need to refresh the current communication strategy, which has become stagnant.
SJ reported currently advertising for a graduate role which will help with having resource within the team to focus on this. SJ has introduced a monthly rolling communication master plan to track project milestones. Working closely with the internal communications team to ensure key milestones are reported
SF suggested for internal communication team to develop a comprehensive branding strategy that captures the transformative vision of the town.
- c) The board agreed to invite a communication team representative to future meetings. Project Visuals – MP JG raised concerns regarding lack of material available such as project visuals for distribution. It was suggested that college students could help with graphic design work.
Action: Regeneration/Internal communications team to work with college students to help produce marketing materials.
- d) Branding – LR highlighted the importance of reinforcing the Transform Nuneaton, SF agreed, suggesting the need for an overarching brand that pulls together different project developments, transcends individual projects funding sources, Encompasses council and third – party development.
The board discussed the importance of creating a narrative that goes beyond current transformation, focuses on the town future potential. The potential considerations that were discussed includes showcasing the vision of residents and businesses, highlighting the town's long term developmental potential, creating a compelling narrative for potential investors and tenants.

- e) Marketing idea – LR proposed hotel could offer school visits to showcase operations, suggested TikTok competition for students, recommended students create storyboard, proposed film and circulate content on LinkedIn. SJ agreed to the idea and indicated openness to discussing with the hotel management the possibility of school visits.
SF suggested using hotel guest testimonial and proposed addressing narratives about the hotel.
Action: SJ to discuss with General Manager of HBH.

SPB26

Any Other Business

- a) Local Business Impact - JJ raised concerned about business challenges, she expressed her concern on constructions impact on businesses, declining footfall, business closing and need to support local businesses. A discussion took place on this. SF acknowledged the challenges and noted that beyond construction, there have been other economic shocks like COVID that have impacted high streets.
LR suggested changing communication approach to highlight that businesses are still open during construction.
- b) Safety and Economic Concerns – JG highlighted retail businesses suffering from theft, emphasized need to make town centre feel safe, raised concern about business security.

SPB27

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

SPB28

Risk register

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

It was agreed that a separate risk to be added with regards to Communication and Branding

Action: SJ to capture the above as a separate risk factor.

Distributed prior to the meeting.

Chair of the Board